

THE MUSIC REVIEW

November 1951



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THE MUSIC REVIEW

Edited by GEOFFREY SHARP

VOL. XII, NO. 4

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The Genesis of Schubert's posthumous Sonata in B flat major

BY

WILLIAM G. HILL

I WISH at the outset to admit that my title may be somewhat misleading. It may suggest that I am in possession of hitherto unknown facts relating to the composition of Schubert's well-known Sonata and that I intend to adduce biographical matter that will clear up the fog that enshrouds the circumstances of its composition. I disavow completely any such biographical intention. I am in possession of no information that is not accessible to anyone. My purpose is merely to bring forward some internal evidence that, in my opinion, shows at least possibilities of interpretation of Schubert's state of mind during the composition of the Sonata. There seems to be nothing much known about the external circumstances of its composition except the date of completion—26th September, 1828. Nevertheless, some significant inferences can be drawn from the work itself.

There are at least two ways in which a solution to our problem presents itself. In the first place several points of similarity may be established between the pianoforte Sonata in question and contemporary, but slightly anterior works of chamber music for strings—points that specifically concern stylistic features associated with such composition and that in fact cry aloud for it. Secondly, there is similarity of form. In itself this would not be significant, but when irregularities appear that make the work somehow individual, and these are followed point by point in a second composition, the assumption must be that the first has in some sense been used as a model for the second. Let us see how these considerations affect the present case.

First—chamber music for strings—strings that sing their melodies and to which Schubert's vocal genius is singularly appropriate. All movements of the B flat piano Sonata exhibit frequently a string-like quality or what is more often called a vocal quality—a suggestion of transcription from chamber music. Especially in two movements, the first and second, there are suggestions of an explicit chamber music work—his own recently composed string Quintet in C.

The *Andante sostenuto* in particular obviously derives from the same well of inspiration as does the *Adagio* of the Quintet (Exs. 1a and 1b). The two-and later three-voiced song that makes up the essential musical content of the

Ex. 1a Adagio

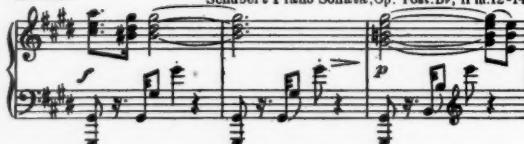
Schubert Quintet, Op. 163, II m. 1, 2

Ex.1b

Andante sostenuto

Schubert Piano Sonata,
Op. Post. B \flat , II m.1,2

first and last divisions of the movement, with the left hand plucking the lightly sounded bass and passing across to a position above the streaming melody of the inner parts—what are these but the long-sustained melody of the three middle strings, the plucked bass of the second cello and the quiet but expressive interjections of the first violin in the Quintet's *Adagio*. This movement has never seemed to me to be effective as a piano piece. The long-sustained chords at measures 12 to 14, and again, with the effect intensified, at measures 101 to 103 (Exs. 2a and 2b), demand an effect impossible to realize on the piano.

Ex.2aSchubert Piano Sonata, Op. Post. B \flat , II m.12-14**Ex.2b**Schubert Piano Sonata, Op. Post. B \flat , II m.101-103

The streaming chords of the melody voices must melt into their resolution *pianissimo*, which must enter without the least observable attack. The tone must have decreased during those five beats *Andante sostenuto*, even on the best of pianos, to a point from which it will be impossible to bring in the resolving chord without the piano's characteristic "bump" that will be fatal to the effect desired. But with strings the desired effect is the natural one, and the whole movement would go much better transcribed for the instrumentation of the Quintet. This work, composed only a month or so before the Sonata, plainly still haunted the composer's imagination.

The other movements all show a string-like quality in their melodic make-up. But that is not at all exceptional with Schubert. In the first movement, however, there is at least one distinct turn of phrase that is traceable directly to the Quintet. Twenty measures before the close of the first movement of that work there is a low trill taken by the two cellos in unison, standing upon the Neapolitan of the dominant, and resolving upon the dominant itself (Ex. 3a). Then again, five measures before the end of the finale, the same device

Ex. 3a

Schubert Quintet
Op. 163, I m. 426, 427

is used on the Neapolitan of the tonic (Ex. 3b). This manner of speech is

Ex. 3b

Schubert Quintet, Op. 163, IV m. 423-429

employed several times in the first movement of the Sonata (Ex. 4), in the

Ex. 4

Schubert Piano Sonata,
Op. Post. B_b, I m. 7-9

well-known bass trills appearing there five times upon the same Neapolitan of the dominant, though it is not confined to this degree, being used several times upon the Neapolitan of the current tonic. The impression of a transcription for the piano of a string device can hardly be avoided.

Now for our second consideration—similarity of form, when that form shows irregularities. I suppose that all musicians have remarked the singular likeness between the opening measures of the finales of the Sonata and the Quartet in the same key, B flat, Op. 130, of Beethoven. But I have been able to uncover

surprisingly little comment on this likeness in the literature of the subject. Perhaps my search has not been very exhaustive, but I have been able to find only *two* references to it.¹ In 1881, H. F. Frost, in his brief work on Schubert, published in the Great Musicians series, says:

"The curious resemblance of the last movement (of the B flat piano Sonata) to the corresponding portion of Beethoven's great Quartet in B flat, Op. 130, cannot fail to be remarked by musicians".

But aside from that he makes no comment at all—nothing about any significance that might be attached to it. Then Donald Tovey, in his article, "Tonality", in the Schubert Centennial issue of *Music & Letters*, October, 1928, says this:

"In the finale of his last Sonata he makes his theme persistently *start* in the supertonic, as Beethoven did in his Quartet, Op. 130".

Beyond these two sketchy references I have been able to find nothing at all—singularly little for so obvious a likeness. And no significance is suggested by either of these men as being attachable to their observed similarity. No significance *should* be attached to mere similarity of theme. That may occur very often, of course, between works of such remote points of origin, or of such incompatible dates as to preclude any influence of the one on the other. After all, there are only twelve tones from which to build music, and in a region of homogeneous style one is bound to find many such examples. However, there may be *kinds* of similarity that at least suggest some sort of mutual influence. In the present instance (Exs. 5a and 5b), the use of the submediant pedal in exactly the same way to introduce the two periods that make up the initial theme of each composition is a case in point. There is no *thematic* likeness between the two musical ideas, but the effect of the unusual pedal, especially

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a piano. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in common time (indicated by 'C'). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The music consists of eighth-note patterns. Measure 1 starts with a forte dynamic (f) and a piano dynamic (p) in the bass. Measures 2-3 show eighth-note chords. Measures 4-5 continue with eighth-note chords. Measures 6-7 show eighth-note chords. Measures 8-9 show eighth-note chords. Measures 10-11 show eighth-note chords. Measures 12-13 show eighth-note chords. Measures 14-15 show eighth-note chords. Measures 16-17 show eighth-note chords. Measures 18-19 show eighth-note chords. Measures 20-21 show eighth-note chords. Measures 22-23 show eighth-note chords. Measures 24-25 show eighth-note chords. Measures 26-27 show eighth-note chords. Measures 28-29 show eighth-note chords. Measures 30-31 show eighth-note chords. Measures 32-33 show eighth-note chords. Measures 34-35 show eighth-note chords. Measures 36-37 show eighth-note chords. Measures 38-39 show eighth-note chords. Measures 40-41 show eighth-note chords. Measures 42-43 show eighth-note chords. Measures 44-45 show eighth-note chords. Measures 46-47 show eighth-note chords. Measures 48-49 show eighth-note chords. Measures 50-51 show eighth-note chords. Measures 52-53 show eighth-note chords. Measures 54-55 show eighth-note chords. Measures 56-57 show eighth-note chords. Measures 58-59 show eighth-note chords. Measures 60-61 show eighth-note chords. Measures 62-63 show eighth-note chords. Measures 64-65 show eighth-note chords. Measures 66-67 show eighth-note chords. Measures 68-69 show eighth-note chords. Measures 70-71 show eighth-note chords. Measures 72-73 show eighth-note chords. Measures 74-75 show eighth-note chords. Measures 76-77 show eighth-note chords. Measures 78-79 show eighth-note chords. Measures 80-81 show eighth-note chords. Measures 82-83 show eighth-note chords. Measures 84-85 show eighth-note chords. Measures 86-87 show eighth-note chords. Measures 88-89 show eighth-note chords. Measures 90-91 show eighth-note chords. Measures 92-93 show eighth-note chords. Measures 94-95 show eighth-note chords. Measures 96-97 show eighth-note chords. Measures 98-99 show eighth-note chords. Measures 100-101 show eighth-note chords. Measures 102-103 show eighth-note chords. Measures 104-105 show eighth-note chords. Measures 106-107 show eighth-note chords. Measures 108-109 show eighth-note chords. Measures 110-111 show eighth-note chords. Measures 112-113 show eighth-note chords. Measures 114-115 show eighth-note chords. Measures 116-117 show eighth-note chords. Measures 118-119 show eighth-note chords. Measures 120-121 show eighth-note chords. Measures 122-123 show eighth-note chords. Measures 124-125 show eighth-note chords. Measures 126-127 show eighth-note chords. Measures 128-129 show eighth-note chords. Measures 130-131 show eighth-note chords. Measures 132-133 show eighth-note chords. Measures 134-135 show eighth-note chords. Measures 136-137 show eighth-note chords. Measures 138-139 show eighth-note chords. Measures 140-141 show eighth-note chords. Measures 142-143 show eighth-note chords. Measures 144-145 show eighth-note chords. Measures 146-147 show eighth-note chords. Measures 148-149 show eighth-note chords. Measures 150-151 show eighth-note chords. Measures 152-153 show eighth-note chords. Measures 154-155 show eighth-note chords. Measures 156-157 show eighth-note chords. Measures 158-159 show eighth-note chords. Measures 160-161 show eighth-note chords. Measures 162-163 show eighth-note chords. Measures 164-165 show eighth-note chords. Measures 166-167 show eighth-note chords. Measures 168-169 show eighth-note chords. Measures 170-171 show eighth-note chords. Measures 172-173 show eighth-note chords. Measures 174-175 show eighth-note chords. Measures 176-177 show eighth-note chords. Measures 178-179 show eighth-note chords. Measures 180-181 show eighth-note chords. Measures 182-183 show eighth-note chords. Measures 184-185 show eighth-note chords. Measures 186-187 show eighth-note chords. Measures 188-189 show eighth-note chords. Measures 190-191 show eighth-note chords. Measures 192-193 show eighth-note chords. Measures 194-195 show eighth-note chords. Measures 196-197 show eighth-note chords. Measures 198-199 show eighth-note chords. Measures 200-201 show eighth-note chords.

¹ Dr. Ludwig Misch has called to my attention (a year after my article was written) the fact that his article, "Zwei B dur Themen", that appeared in *Acta Musicologica*, København, Vol. XIII, Fasc. I-N, 1941, and was reprinted in his book, *Beethoven-Studien* (Berlin, de Gruyter, 1950), has discussed the likeness of the themes quoted in Exs. 5a and 5b. I am grateful to Dr. Misch for bringing this very interesting and valuable article to my attention—I should have been aware of it before. But I feel that, since my approach to the subject is so different from his, our articles are mutually complementary and, though they start at approximately the same point, move in different directions.

when used in identical keys, gives an effect of similarity that is much stronger than would be the case with mere thematic likeness. It had no doubt a

Ex. 5b

Beethoven, IV m 1-18 (Quartet, Op. 130,

The musical score consists of four staves, each representing a different instrument in a string quartet. The instruments are likely violin I, violin II, viola, and cello. The score spans 18 measures, starting with a dynamic of *p*, followed by *pp*. The music features complex harmonic progressions, including changes in key signature and time signature. Measures 1-10 show a section with eighth-note patterns and sixteenth-note chords. Measures 11-18 continue this style, with some eighth-note patterns and sixteenth-note chords.

piquancy for the listeners of the period of much more powerful effect than for the jaded ears of the present. It is also the sort of thing that would intrigue a young contemporary composer and which would lead to imitation. It is to be noted also that the metrical conditions in the two cases are almost identical.

Beethoven's finale, of November, 1826, antedates Schubert's by approximately two years only, and it was bound to be seized upon with avidity, as were all of Beethoven's major works, by the younger musician. The influence of Beethoven upon Schubert, as indeed upon all forward looking young musicians of the day, is well known. Samuel L. Laciari, for instance, in an article on "The Chamber Music of Franz Schubert" in *The Musical Quarterly* for October, 1928, calls attention to one instance. He says:

"This fine work (the Octet) stems from the Beethoven Septet, Op. 20, for the influence of the latter upon the Octet is unmistakable. A comparison of some of the externals of the works is interesting:

BEETHOVEN SEPTET

1. *Adagio* (Intro.) and *Allegro*.
2. *Adagio* (melody in clarinet).
3. *Menuetto*.
4. Theme and five variations.
5. *Scherzo*.
6. *Andante* (Intro.) and *Presto*.

SCHUBERT OCTET

1. *Adagio* (Intro.) and *Allegro*.
2. *Andante* (melody in clarinet).
3. *Scherzo*.
4. Theme and seven variations.
5. *Menuetto*.
6. *Andante* (Intro.) and *Allegro*.

This is rather too striking a similarity of plan to be altogether accidental. There are cases which contain thematic analogies as well (Exs. 6a, 6b and 6c).²

Ex. 6a Beethoven, Piano Sonata, Op. 10, Nr. 1
Adagio molto

Schubert, Piano Sonata, (E♭-1817)
Andante molto

Ex. 6b Beethoven, Egmont Overture, Op. 84
Allegro

Schubert, Piano Sonata, (c-1828)
Allegro

Ex. 6c Beethoven, Piano Sonata, Op. 14, Nr. 2
Allegro assai

Schubert, Piano Sonata, (a-1817)
Allegro vivace

These likenesses are of a superficial sort, perhaps, and taken by themselves would not constitute a very convincing proof of active influence. However, if taken in conjunction with similarities in form, particularly when those similarities involve *like irregularities*, they cannot be so easily dismissed. What do our examples offer in this respect?

I shall now undertake analyses of the movements in question—a difficult thing to do with clarity unless the reader makes use of scores. Both are cast in *transitional forms*, lying somewhere between rondo- and sonata-allegro forms. In the analytical scheme given in the preface to the Philharmonia score of the Beethoven Quartet, the editor, identified merely by the initials, H. G., calls it flatly "Rondo Form", though he proceeds to give details that do not much resemble any regular rondo. His analysis runs as follows: "Prin. section and Transitory passage—1st Intermediate Sec.—2nd Int. Sec.—Dev.—Recap.—3rd Int. Sec.—Last recurrence of Prin. Sec. and Coda." (I retain the editor's—or his translator's—rather curious nomenclature.)

To be sure this shows rondo elements, at least if analysed in his fashion. The development deals with the "principal section" and thus in effect brings in a recurrence of it immediately before its undeveloped normal reappearance

² I am indebted to my colleague, Dr. Hubert Kessler, for calling my attention to these examples.

in the recapitulation. Then again there is, according to our analyst, a further recurrence just prior to the *coda*. Thus he admits three statements of the principal idea. But following the first of these there appear, again according to him, two different contrasting sections, which appear again in the same way in the recapitulation. So the scheme would be A-B-C-A developed -A-B'-C'-A-Coda,—obviously no regular rondo. If the B and C be heard as two sections of a single digression, it will appear much closer to the pattern of sonata-allegro, especially since the *coda*, in my opinion, actually begins some 25 measures prior to this last statement of A, which in any case consists of its first part only and a half of that transposed, and thus forms a *second section* merely of the *coda* itself. There is a difficulty, however, in that the first A and B are repeated together, like a sonata exposition, but exclusive of C—which would seem, perhaps, to eliminate the possibility of hearing B and C as sections of the same subject. The pattern could then be set out as follows:

:A-B : -C-Dev.-A-B'-C'-Coda, or A-B-A-B-C-Dev.-A-B'-C'-Coda.

In addition, these divisions are in different keys, F and A flat, and have a twelve measure transitional passage between them. On the other hand, C is not entirely new, but is derived from, or has at any rate a marked family likeness to the material of the transition between A and B (Exs. 7a and 7b). It, the C

Ex.7a

Beethoven VI m. 39-45 (Quartet, Op. 130)

Ex.7b

Beethoven VI m. 109-117 (Quartet, Op. 130)

section, is roughly ternary in design but, in spite of its 50-odd measures length, is (1) made up of variants of the first 8-measure period, which itself has little

characteristic physiognomy, and has a consequent phrase parallel in construction with the antecedent, and (2) is beyond that made up of continual repetitions of like or similar motives. These are features of closing sections not of full-blown, independent divisions of larger forms. In the recapitulation the repetition of "A and B" fails to occur, and C follows immediately after the transition in the key of B flat except for the first 8 measures which are in E flat. This C is spoken of as the "3rd Intermediate Section" (!) in the editor's analysis, though it is the same passage essentially as what he calls the "2nd Intermediate Section" earlier in the movement. If it is possible to think of C and B as two sections of the second subject, then our pattern will look like this: A-B (secs. 1 and 2)-Development-A'-B' (secs. 1 and 2)-*Coda*: the plan of a typical sonata-*allegro* form.

The Schubert movement is also an intermediate form between rondo and sonata, leaning a little more heavily toward rondo than did the Beethoven movement. The second division, however, is a typical sonata 2nd subject and not at all the subordinate theme of a rondo. It occupies 116 measures divided into four distinct sections—the broad *cantabile* melody that takes up the first 70 measures being contrasted markedly by the assertive and much shorter following sections which might be called *codettas*. The 2nd and 3rd of these are set in F minor—the tonic minor with relation to the first section, a difference of mode if not of key—and the relative minor incidentally to the key of the so-called C section, or in our thought the second section of the second subject, in the Beethoven movement. (It must be borne in mind that the basic keys of the two movements are identical and that therefore corresponding portions of them can be compared on the same footing.) This point has no special significance perhaps, but it does show that Beethoven's choice of key for this division is not merely arbitrary, as might appear at first sight, but is perfectly logical and orderly. Returning to the Schubert example, the first idea, on its first presentation, was designed as a broad 3-part song form, with the first part repeated, and with parts two and three repeated together—but, on repetition, part two is extended by ten measures, and the consequent phrase of part three is dissolved into the transition. On its reappearance after the digression, this idea is abbreviated to a point at the completion of part two, thus cutting some 40 measures from its original length. Then follows a development, which deals exclusively with the initial idea and might be considered as a developed extension of the ritornel of a rondo. On the other hand, the reappearance of the first idea in its original key, *plus* development, might be taken as the development section of a sonata-*allegro*, as in the example of the Brahms fourth Symphony—especially as what would normally be the fourth appearance of the ritornel is immediately dissolved into the *coda* and thus a fourth A actually does not occur. The development will be prefaced merely by the severely abbreviated first subject (if we use then the sonata nomenclature). This would reduce the scheme of the design to the following pattern:

A-B-Dev.-A-B'-*Coda* (derived from A).

Bringing the two designs together for the sake of comparison, we have:

Beethoven:

A - B (sectional)	-	Development	-	A	-	B (sectional)
I 2						I 2
B \flat F A \flat		F		Mod. g	E \flat B \flat	B \flat E \flat B \flat
I 68-109		160		178	223-229-233	308 353-361
(VI in E \flat = C, dominant of F)		(True Dev.)				
			-	Coda		
				(based on 1st subj.)		
				403	493	

Schubert:

A - B (sectional)	-	Development	-	A - B (sectional)	-	
I 2 3 4				I 2 3 4		
B \flat F f f F		B \flat		Mod. B \flat B \flat b \flat b \flat B \flat		
I 86-156-168-186		225		255	312 360-430-442-460	
		(Abb. 1st subj.)		(True Dev.)		
			-	Coda		
				(based on 1st subj.)		
				492	540	

The basic keys are the same; the As have the already described resemblance; sections 1 of the B divisions have at least the same key—though it is the regular, and thus expected, tonality of the dominant. Section 2, if it is to be so-called, stands in the key of A flat in the case of the Beethoven movement, and sections 2 and 3 in the Schubert case in f minor, the relative minor of A flat.

About the development sections there are several observations to make. In the Schubert example the first division, now at least for the sake of argument included in the development, begins exactly as does the 1st subject, in the *same key*, and continues so for somewhat less than half of its original length, quite as a rondo ritornel, before it proceeds to the development proper. It might be argued that this is irregular and thus as a development section untenable—but there are dozens of examples of a quite similar nature, witness for example the first movements of Brahms' piano Quartet in G minor and of the same composer's fourth Symphony. For 31 measures it pursues its course in the basic key, then dissolves into development which continues for 57 measures.

In the Beethoven example also the development deals exclusively with the substance of the first subject. It opens over a C pedal, at first as VI in E flat from the original VI-II-V-I sequence of the first subject, but becoming after a few measures V in F major. This pedal is actual or understood for 17 measures and, since the second half of the sequence does not appear, gives the impression of having been the dominant of F minor and major all the way.

It is rather unusual to maintain one tonality, even the *impression* of one, so far into the body of a development section, more than a fourth of the length of that section. This, however, balances the use of the tonic in the corresponding position in the Schubert, which occupies roughly the *same percentage of the total*. (That is, of course, if one accepts it as part of the development section in the Schubert finale.)

Progress from this point is normal until the *coda*, which in each instance is based on the first subject, giving rise to the confusion about whether or not an additional return of the main idea is contemplated in the rondo sense. In my opinion there is no such intention.

We have then two movements composed within two years of each other—the earlier by the man whom Schubert honoured and respected above all composers—“sein Verehrer und Bewunderer” he calls himself on the title-page of the four-hand Variations on a French Song, Op. 10. He has previously used Beethoven’s works as models. He now uses a theme at the outset that startlingly recalls that of the opening of Beethoven’s last Quartet movement. He employs a form that parallels that of the Beethoven finale in many respects, and it is significant that many of these likenesses are at points that are irregular—that is, at points where, had he followed the customary procedure, he would have done otherwise. It is difficult to believe, in view of these considerations, that he did not use the Beethoven movement as a model.

The similarities shown between these various movements suggest not only a direct modelling in the case described, but the employment of devices and of entire stylistic procedures previously used in chamber music works of his own. In using the Beethoven work as a model Schubert is not guilty of thematic borrowing or of plagiarism in any sense. He merely takes his inspiration from existing works, using them as points of departure from which his own genius takes wing. Note that even in the opening theme of the finale, where the likeness is most marked, there is no *thematic* likeness. In formal matters, however, it is rather a different story. Also, the fact that this piano Sonata leans so heavily on chamber music—may it not suggest that the whole is, in some sort, a transcription of an imaginary work for strings?

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Max Reger (1873-1916)

An Introductory Musical Portrait*

BY

DONALD MITCHELL

I

THE PROBLEM OF THE CONSERVATIVE REVOLUTIONARY

"Every composer must start from the beginning."—MAX REGER.

HISTORY has an odd way of dealing with certain composers, and Reger's fate has been odder than most. That the verdict of his contemporaries was a more discriminating and just appraisal of his talent than that offered by ourselves—and we must count ourselves, even at this short distance, as posterity—would seem to disprove the rule that most contemporary judgments are wrong if and when they come into conflict with posterity's. "Time alone will tell" is a sound enough proposition until it doesn't; and the rather ambiguous obscurity which envelops Reger (at least as far as this country is concerned) makes one suspect that Time doesn't know quite what to do with him.

What then was the judgment of his contemporaries? That he was a great composer? Undoubtedly a band of devoted disciples thought he was, and during the latter part of his life, and certainly after his death, he was somewhat prematurely crowned a "Meister". It was not without significance that the traditional laurel wreath encircled Reger's death-bed brow; or that his spectacles, symbol of professorial respectability, were left gracing his nose. In those two scenic details is revealed an essential part of the judgment of Reger's contemporaries—essential, but by no means the most interesting, since it so very much lends support to to-day's view of him as the conscientious German academic whose exercises were so convincing that everyone mistook them for the genuine article. Hence the laurel wreath and the fussy verbal tributes at his grave.

While we can always spare a sympathetic smile for the mistaken beliefs of a just previous generation, this somewhat supercilious and superficial attitude completely overlooks the more interesting aspect of the verdict of Reger's contemporaries. To put it in brief, if over-simplified form, he was considered a "revolutionary", even a ruthless and dangerous one. So much so that his C major Sonata for violin and piano, Op. 72, received no end of a noisy and outraged press, and his piano Concerto was estimated by his countrymen to be "the most unpopular composition that has appeared for years". As the late W. J. Turner shrewdly observed, this was "of itself an achievement in Germany and prejudices one in its favour". Possibly after all the laurel wreath was more hardly earned than we at first imagined, and from contemporary

* Substantial portions of this article formed the basis of my introductory talk to the Third Programme's Max Reger series (January–March, 1951) broadcast on 22nd January, 1951. I am grateful to the BBC for permission to reproduce.

accounts and from Reger's own voluminous correspondence it would seem that opposition to his music was continuous and often intensely bitter.

Now Reger as "revolutionary" is an altogether more lively proposition than Reger as "reactionary" and deserves our closest attention. It may be that the contemporary verdict of him, intended though it was as criticism and not as praise, is altogether nearer the truth than posterity's contrary assumption that he was an arch-conservative of no relevance to the music of our own time. Of course it's downright bad-mannered for a musical hang-over to persist, and Reger, according to all the illogical, quasi-historical rules, should have been dispelled long ago by draughts of Parisian alka seltzer, vintage 1920. Yet his personality remains, if not very substantially for the English speaking world, then more strongly in Germany and the Low countries where he made his reputation. But neither Reger's personality, nor his ideals and ambitions fit very neatly into a conception of "for home consumption only", and a better appreciation of his music might do something to deflate his text-book characterization as a purely Teutonic composer and enable us to view him as the more major figure he undeniably was.

Revolutionary or extreme conservative? The problem can only be rewardingly discussed in the light of Reger's own musical environment and the changed musical landscape which succeeded it—one, indeed, which Reger helped to change. That he was a conservative composer is, of course, partly true, and more especially true of our own judgment of him. In fact it is only the conservative part of him which we really understand and which we ultimately reject as needless duplication of past centuries. On the other hand, the majority of his contemporaries, far from understanding his conservatism, only misunderstood his rebelliousness—which they in their turn rejected, not for its derivativeness, but for what they thought was an unnecessary upheaval of the academic ideals of nineteenth-century German music. Their understanding, therefore, of the relatively new aspects of Reger's art was, paradoxically enough, cast in the form of opposition—but at least it was a response on the whole more sensitive and alert than that of succeeding decades.

II

THE MUSIC MAKER

"[My pupils] forget that 'Art' ('Kunst') comes from 'being able' ('können')."—MAX REGER.

"But my dear fellow, you're still making music!" Such was the remark made to Reger after a concert of his orchestral works by the eminent, worldly, prosperous and acute Richard Strauss, whose rather clumsy irony does not conceal what was fundamentally a very perceptive appraisal of Reger's music. A comment perhaps tinged with regret, since Strauss was never quite sure how far his colleague approved of what he was doing to further the cause of the "New" German school. Reger's late excursions into programme music, the *Romantic*, *Böcklin* and *Ballet* suites for orchestra, must have struck Strauss as very half-hearted affairs compared with his own minute domestic pictorialism. "Another few jumps and you'll be on our side", he added hopefully on

another occasion. But Strauss was to be disappointed. Reger returned to his old loves, variations and fugues and the restrained proportions of the late chamber works. The Hero's life was not for him; and if Strauss was capable of perceptive irony, so too was Reger. When he came to dedicate a piece to Strauss* it was not one that employed the orchestral apparatus, as might reasonably have been imagined, but the organ—the instrument nearest Reger's heart and perhaps farthest removed from Strauss'.

"Still making music!" Probably Reger would not have been displeased with Strauss' phrase as an epitaph. The actual physical business of setting down notes on paper was half the secret of Reger's creativity. His industry was in itself a continual stimulant to his imagination and explains why he so rarely felt the need of an extra-musical association to induce him to compose (his *lieder*, of course, excepted). Nothing is more characteristic than his virtual obsession with variation form, either varying his own or others' themes. There are the *Mozart* and *Hiller* sets for orchestra, the *Bach* and *Telemann* for piano solo, the *Beethoven* for two pianos, and the Op. 73 variations on an original theme for organ. Variation procedure haunts his big organ chorale-fantasias, and often his slow movements (particularly in the chamber music) are cast in the form of an *adagio*, or *andante, con variazioni*. Putting a theme through its musical paces, so to speak, was one of his chief delights; hence Reger's reputation as an "absolute" musician in contra-distinction to Strauss, or even Mahler. His output was fabulously extensive—a fact likely to be looked upon with suspicion to-day when fertility has become confused with facility. But this continuous process of writing music, the manual labour of it, was an indispensable element in Reger's attitude to the act of creation. If he had written less he would not have written so much so well. He was first and foremost a "music maker", a plain and sober description which fits his biography.

Reger was born in a prim *Schulhaus* in the small Bavarian village of Brand on the 19th March, 1873. As a young boy he had a *Hausorgel* built for him by his father, and a more prophetic gift could hardly have been devised. Music was not his parents' profession—they were both school-teachers, and determined, moreover, that their son should follow in their footsteps—but they were both musical. The father was an accomplished instrumental player and the mother, a more sensitive soul with pronounced artistic leanings rather diffidently expressed, taught her talented son the rudiments of the piano: he repaid the compliment later by writing songs for his mother to sing. Reger's life at home cannot have been especially eventful but it appears to have been tolerably happy, in spite of his father's chronic asthma and prolonged drinking bouts (a diversion carried by his son to legendary—indeed almost mythical—heights of excess).

A major turn in the young Reger's musical fortunes occurred when he began his musical studies with Adalbert Lindner, the church organist at the nearby town of Weiden. Lindner was a musician of more than local culture and almost at once perceived the latent possibilities of his gifted pupil. In conditions

* The *Fantasia and Fugue* in D minor, Op. 135b.

approaching secrecy, the boy's first composition—an Overture in B minor for flute, clarinet, string quartet and piano—was despatched to the celebrated Hugo Riemann who replied in encouraging terms and enclosed a copy of one of his own primers.

Nevertheless, Reger, regardless of this pat on the back from a distinguished musical personality, was still uncertain of his musical ambitions. The event which established his determination to compose was a visit to Bayreuth in 1888 when he was fifteen. Hearing both *Parsifal* and *Die Meistersinger*, he decided that music too should be his profession. After a struggle with his cautious parents he entered Sondershausen Conservatoire where Riemann, on the strength of his juvenile compositions, had accepted him as a pupil.

Reger flourished under Riemann, who was at times an exacting and exasperatingly doctrinaire teacher, but possessed a mind with which Reger was in immediate sympathy. It was Riemann who introduced Reger to the musical potentialities of the Protestant chorale which was to prove such a dominant influence in much of his work. That he was a devout Catholic did not prevent him from writing extensively for the Protestant church; his four chorale cantatas which celebrate the main Evangelical festivals are expert examples of their kind by a composer who was able to embrace the best of both denominational worlds: the communal, universal aspect of the chorale and the opportunities it provided for individual ornamentation and decoration, almost Baroque in the richness and complexity of their detail. This stylistic characteristic of Reger is nowhere more evident than in the chorale-fantasias for organ with their endless invention and free variation so often approximating to the lost art of inspired extemporization. Indeed, this use of variation was to become a fundamental constant of Reger's music, and the debt to Riemann is obvious. If Reger was in harmony with the Professor, he found his wife of a less enlightened musical disposition than her revered husband. Reger's Op. 2, a Trio for piano, violin and viola, already showing the cloven hoof in the shape of its finale (*an adagio con variazioni*) and its unorthodox instrumentation, failed to meet with the Frau Professor's approval. "Ah well", was her gloomy comment, "if one must go one better than Beethoven or Brahms".

Riemann moved to Wiesbaden with Reger on his heels; and it was at Wiesbaden that Reger met not only his future wife but also his first publisher—Herr Augener, head of the London music house. It seems almost quixotically improbable that Reger's early chamber music, songs, piano and organ pieces should have been issued under this familiar English imprint: but the improbable happened, although sales were small, reviews few, and recognition slow.

When Riemann left Wiesbaden for Leipzig, Reger, still only twenty, took over Riemann's Wiesbaden theory class, an appointment which he held until he was called up for his year's military service. But the strain of army life was too much for him, he was invalided out, and shortly after his return to Wiesbaden he suffered a severe nervous collapse and was obliged to seek rest at his home which, meanwhile, had shifted from Brand to Weiden. For three years Reger dwelt there in comparative retirement—years among the most prolific in his career when he concentrated with extreme energy on chamber

music and music for the organ. Some of his most virile organ chorale-fantasias date from this period. The set of three, Op. 52, are outstanding technical achievements, and the last of the trio *Hallelujah! Gott zu loben, bleibe meine Seelenfreud* almost overwhelms with its resourcefulness and exuberant vitality; its concluding fugue—an extraordinary gesture of confidence and faith in a time of transition—is proof of Reger's prevailing mood of self-assurance, and an optimism backed by a substantial tradition of which he felt himself to be part. Karl Straube, the eminent organist of Wesel, did much to publicize Reger's organ works, and heartened by growing successes, Reger was able to move to Munich and launch out into wider circles and projects.

Although to the end of his life Reger was never free from controversy, his Munich period (from 1901-1907) was the most controversial of his career—for the very good reason that the music he wrote there confounded even his most fanatical adherents. The C major Sonata for piano and violin, Op. 72—the “complete lunacy, incurable morbidity and nerve-racking perversity” of which bemused the critics—the F sharp minor Variations and Fugue for organ, Op. 73, and the D minor Quartet, Op. 74, were a hat-trick of musical scandals. Riemann, perhaps a trifle dismayed on discovering that his most brilliant pupil was turning out to be a little less respectable than he had anticipated, designated the Munich years Reger's “wild” period. However wildness brought its own reward, for in 1902 Reger was able to marry, and in 1904 he joined the staff of the Munich Academy. But for all his geniality as a man—and Reger never lost his peasant sense of humour either verbally or musically—he was not in the least successful at coming to terms with academic institutions, and what occurred later at Leipzig, occurred first at Munich. He fell out with his colleagues, quarrelled with the influential Munich choir of which he was principal conductor, and felt compelled to resign. This might have been an economic disaster had it not been for his prowess as an executant—a fruit of Riemann's insistence on his perfecting his piano technique. From Munich onwards, Reger was continually travelling about Germany, Switzerland and the Low countries, as an exponent of his own and others' works.

1907 brought with it the offer of a post at the Leipzig Conservatoire—still the musical Mecca of middle Europe—which carried with it joint responsibility for the musical studies at the University. Reger accepted at once, but, in spite of his high hopes, Leipzig followed a very similar pattern to Munich. Ceaseless concert touring (which included London: Reger gave two successful concerts at the Bechstein Hall and was feasted at the Royal Academy), endless teaching at the Conservatoire, limitless squabbling with his colleagues, furious rows with the students of the University choir, and, of course, perpetual composition. Towards the end of his Munich years he had more seriously considered the orchestra as a compositional medium and written both a *Sinfonietta*, Op. 90, and a *Serenade*, Op. 95. In Leipzig he continued this association; the *Hiller Variations*, Op. 100, the violin and piano concertos, Op. 101 and 114, the massive choral and orchestral setting of the 100th Psalm, Op. 106, and the *Symphonic Prologue to a Tragedy*, Op. 108, all date from this period.

If Reger's reputation had increased in stature, his opponents' abuse had

decreased in quality. The University choir insulted him at rehearsals, the press (as he put it) were "shouting" against him, and Leipzig began to assume as hostile an air as Munich. Once more Reger expressed his dissatisfaction and resigned from the University although he agreed to continue at the Conservatoire—a position he fulfilled until his death.

As he had previously fled from Munich, Reger was enabled to turn his back on Leipzig by accepting with alacrity new musical employment—on this occasion Kapellmeister to the Grand Duke of Meiningen's famous orchestra. On the 1st October, 1911, Reger moved to Meiningen, and for the next two years was entirely absorbed in directing his orchestra in concerts over all Germany. "They say 'The swine composes, plays the piano—now he even tries to conduct'", Reger reported humorously of himself; his attempts were successful and his programmes enterprising—Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, by no means staple German musical diet, found its way into his concerts—a point worth special note since Debussy's influence was to show itself in the sensitive scoring of Reger's late orchestral works. He was one of the very few German composers who responded positively and immediately to the then "new" French school. Naturally the Meiningen orchestra was a stimulus to Reger's ever active imagination, and a flood of orchestral pieces resulted, three of them with a distinct programmatic bias—a new departure for Reger. The *Romantic Suite*, Op. 125, the four *Böcklin* tone-poems, Op. 128, and the lightly built *Ballet Suite*, Op. 130, less intended for dancing than as a series of evocative musical pantomimes. But Reger, as he wrote on one occasion, was "pursued by misfortune"—the strain of his combined duties at Meiningen and Leipzig told on his health, and early in 1914 he collapsed and entered a sanatorium in the Southern Tyrol. He never returned as Kapellmeister to Meiningen—his doctors would not permit it—but nothing was able to stop him writing music; and he produced at this time the *Mozart Variations and Fugue*, Op. 132, his best known and probably best loved orchestral work, appropriately dedicated to the members of his own orchestra.

Even Meiningen was not to pass without its share of quarrelling, and during his last months there Reger was involved in his customary routine of petty insults, slander and back-biting, a social game at which the officers of a small European court were past-masters. This parochial bickering was terminated in August, 1914, by the declaration of war. Reger was called up for service in the *Landsturm*, but his poor physique ensured his rejection and he was able to proceed with his plans for moving to a new house in Jena. Like a good patriot, he accepted the war with naive enthusiasm, and his *Fatherland Overture*, Op. 140, represents his bombastic mood of "my country right or wrong". Soon, however, his martial spirits crumbled, and he was writing the funeral *Requiem*, Op. 144b, for the German dead. Ensconced at Jena in his spacious villa, he commented morosely on rationing, food queues and postal censorship; the war was not what he had expected it to be, nor was it the "social revolution" he had hoped for as an apprentice social democrat in Munich.

Removed from his orchestra, he returned once more to chamber music, to the piano and the organ. "I shall stay in Jena as long as I live", he wrote.

But he was not to live long. On the 10th May, 1916, he left for Leipzig, suffered a sudden and unexpected stroke, and in the Hotel Hentschel, during the early hours of 11th May, died peacefully in his sleep.

III

POINTS OF VIEW

"There is no compelling artistic creative urge in most of this music; the great technical skill of the plodding fugues, the various shades of grey in the slow movements, and the nervously excited *allegros* that he wrote in profusion differ in mood only, not in ideas."—

P. H. LÁNG (in *Music in Western Civilization*).

"... a total output of a magnitude without parallel at the present time. A life's work which can be measured only by the standard of the old masters . . . ever on a high level, ever commanding respect by its sincerity, and—in individual instances—of a truly classical greatness".—

EGON WELLESZ (in Cobbett's *Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music*).

Arnold Schönberg has written, in *Style and Idea*: "A new technique had to be created, and in this development, Max Reger, Gustav Mahler and also I myself played a rôle". Coming from Schönberg, the veteran apostle of the "Official revolution" as Constant Lambert termed it, this is a statement of exceptional interest. No one doubts Schönberg's revolutionary character, and even Mahler is recognized as the vital bridge between the late nineteenth-century Viennese school and its twentieth-century *coda* and prologue in the shape of Schönberg and his followers. Reger remains the most obscure figure although his influence goes wider and deeper than might be imagined. For example, influences in Schönberg's late music are hard to trace, but Reger figures plainly enough in the Variations and Fugue on a Recitative for organ, Op. 40—indeed the whole conception of the work is Regerian. At an equally extreme end of the scale is a piece in an idiom more familiar to us—Weinberger's *Schwanda the Bagpiper*: even if we were not aware that Weinberger was Reger's pupil the Polka and Fugue would have told us as much. Schönberg and Weinberger—two greater opposites could hardly be contrived—but Reger's accommodating spirit partially embraces both.

Reger's part in the creation of a new technique—the "emancipation of the dissonance" is what Schönberg had in mind—was a fact only dimly apprehended by his contemporaries: hence their opposition to Reger's revolutionary Munich tactics. His tonality, though of course not in the same radical street as Schönberg's, now and again links hands with the Austrian composer's, or at least with the Schönberg of the transitional phase before the 12-tone system fully matured. That strange song *Ein Paar* (Op. 55, No. 9) is peculiarly akin, not only in mood, but in melodic and harmonic style to songs in Schönberg's half-impressionist, half-expressionist manner. Indeed from one aspect Reger's harmony at its most adventurous might be viewed as a kind of limited, though quite unmETHODICAL and probably unconscious harmonic "expressionism"; his complicated chord structures must often be considered as vertical sonorities existing in their own right, although Reger never abandoned key relationships

systematically, as did Schönberg. But the sensation of insecurity experienced by so many listeners to Reger's music, ascribed to his intense, "wandering", "homeless" chromaticism, is really based on an inability to perceive the autonomous nature of the isolated chord or chordal group—I don't mean in a verbally analytical sense which would reduce the whole of listening to music to an absurdity—but purely in the sphere of musical feeling: admittedly a difficult task in a harmonic style which moves as rapidly as Reger's very often does. Frequently Reger's cadences are as much due to what was harmonically left out as to what was harmonically put in—examples abound in the superb B \flat clarinet Sonata, Op. 107. The resultant side-stepping and tonal short-cuts are liable to sound awkward and unconvincing where the listener's harmonic sensibility is lacking.

Undoubtedly Reger's tonality formed a large part of the style which his contemporaries found incoherent, but allied to this vertical, harmonic aspect of his music, is the horizontal—Reger's strenuous belief in counterpoint, moreover linear counterpoint, which in our own time has been the special province of Hindemith. Hindemith is possibly the composer more heavily influenced by Reger than any other comparable contemporary figure, for he reacted most positively not only to Reger's counterpoint but to his whole aesthetic—Reger's output included a quantity of music which may be justly treated as an anticipation of Hindemith's "Utility" music of the 1920s. Acquaintance with Reger's E \flat Quartet, Op. 109, and the C major violin Sonata, Op. 72, especially the latter's motoric rhythmic patterns and its sometimes percussive use of the piano, is of first importance for understanding the foundations of Hindemith's style.

"For me Bach is the beginning and end of all music", Reger wrote; and this remark, though an obvious exaggeration, gives us a clue to his obsession with fugue, counterpoint and polyphony: it permits us to see what tradition it was he partly inherited, partly formulated. For in many ways his whole life and work stood in obstinate contradiction to the prevailing tendencies of his own day. Perhaps we need not be too surprised by his insistence on counterpoint for counterpoint's sake, since he lived in a period when it was both historically necessary and inevitable that a reaction should take place against the nineteenth century's subjectivism, and particularly its looseness of form. Reger's preoccupation with variation and fugue ("Others make fugues: I can only live in them", he said) was the "conservatism" which saved him from complete condemnation by his contemporaries, because they were forms superficially easy to recognize and assimilate (concessions, as it were, which satisfied the public hunger for being able to like what they knew already). But this similar formal basis characterizes some Schönberg and much Berg—the contrapuntal complexity of *Pierrot Lunaire* for instance, or the rigid underlying formalism of Berg's *Wozzeck* or *Chamber Concerto*, which, as a characteristic of the 12-tone school, has been very little studied. Here in fact is a common link not only with Reger but with the general movement towards neo-classicism; yet neither Schönberg nor Berg would ever be classified by anyone in their senses as "conservative" composers.

Although this contrapuntal preoccupation of Reger's was an historical event which had to happen, what other avenue of exploration was open to him? There was no theatrical element in his musical make-up and thus opera was denied him: Strauss was exercising a brilliant, but exclusive, monopoly in the realm of the tone-poem—a form of which, with its Lisztian pedigree, Reger was in any case suspicious: the symphony lay in Mahlerian, albeit imperial, ruins in Vienna; and neither Reger, nor, for that matter, Strauss, was fool enough to commit symphonic suicide. The nearest Reger approached the symphony was in his *Sinfonietta*—a distinctly prophetic title and mental attitude since it is a form much more fashionable now than it was in 1905; of the large-scale symphony he planned round about 1908 he completed only the first movement, which stands as the *Symphonic Prologue to a Tragedy*: strictly speaking a failure which makes its own historical comment.

In addition, it is vital to remember the almost claustrophobic musical climate of middle Europe towards the end of the nineteenth century, with its suffocating burden of the "great" German tradition which weighed heavily on the conscience of any composer born after Beethoven. Is it not significant that it was not through the orchestra—the still dominant instrumental medium of the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early 1900s—that Reger chose chiefly to express himself, but through the organ, an instrument which had fallen into comparative disuse? Much the same is applicable to chamber music. It would be difficult to write a history of late nineteenth-century music in terms of its chamber music alone. But Reger's output in this field was immense and included interesting experiments with the possibilities of the single instrumental voice, the most intransigent of all *media*. He wrote no less than eleven sonatas for the violin alone, together with three suites for the viola and three for the cello. If one thinks of the sizeable scores of Mahler, Strauss, Pfitzner or the young Schönberg, and then of Reger's solo sonatas, it can be seen just how far removed he was stylistically from his eminent contemporaries. Of course there was a precedent for these solo sonatas in Bach, but as Professor Láng very acutely remarks:

"One of the most pregnant lessons of history is that the kernel of the new ideas that seem to arise with each succeeding epoch may always be found in previous times. This is also true with regard to styles."

If Reger could not have happened without Bach and Brahms, Hindemith and even the mature Roussel might not have happened without Reger. Thus even Reger's seeming conservatism has a revolutionary side.

A great composer? In the final analysis, I think not. A *near-great* composer is possibly the best and shortest of judgments—a judgment which does not exclude a number of works which are great in their own right. The clarinet Quintet, Op. 146, the third clarinet Sonata, Op. 107, probably the two sets of orchestral variations (the *Hiller* and *Mozart*), certainly many of the *Lieder*, the quartets in D minor, Op. 74, and in E \flat , Op. 109, some of the brief organ pieces (above all the prelude and fugue in F from Op. 85) and some of the longer: the Variations and Fugue, Op. 73, the Fantasia and Fugue, Op. 135b. A not inconsiderable list.

It may seem that I have dwelt in too much detail on Reger's historical function, but he is one of the few major composers whom it is almost impossible to understand fully without first understanding his history. A fact which may lead us to underrate him as a composer of merely historic significance, a polite form of text-book burial which is contradicted by the vitality and vigour of his music. Nevertheless, that Reger was so much made by his time (leaving aside and apart his contribution to the musical future) is a measure of his comparative failure to achieve real greatness. History has little to do with the few great composers who were outside history, were neither "trends" nor sign-posts of what was to come, but rather the future realized in the present. Reger, perhaps, was aware of this. "But children", he said constantly of his last works, "I am only just beginning". No composer could have lived at a more difficult period; no composer more faithfully discharged his musical obligations to it. Reger's revolutionary conservatism was an historical necessity and his conscious assumption of this *historical rôle*, as distinct from one purely *musical*, is proof of his extraordinary integrity. It might well be that Schönberg was thinking of Reger when he wrote the following passage in his *Harmonielehre*:

"It is a pity that nowadays the idea 'One can write everything and anything', keeps so many young people from learning something worthwhile, to understand the classics, to acquire culture. For 'anything and everything could be written in former days' but it never was any good. No master would dare to write 'anything'—he writes as he must, to fulfil his task. To prepare for that, with great diligence and with a thousand doubts of his ability and with a thousand scruples as to whether he has properly understood the message received from on high—this is reserved only for those who have the courage and the fervour to suffer all the consequences of a burden placed on their shoulders without their volition. And that is a long way from the wilfulness of a 'trend' and it is far braver."

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Katya Kabanova Reconsidered

BY

CHARLES STUART

Katya Kabanova, the first Janáček opera to be produced in England, had so cold, patronizing or frankly hostile a reception from most of the papers when put on at Sadler's Wells last spring that we are not likely, so far as I can see, to hear much more of it. Let us take an affectionate valedictory glance, before it is quite forgotten, at a score exceptional alike for its structure and the intensity of its poetry.

We were told by *The Times* the morning after that *Katya* lacks thematic organization. This is not a reproach. It is a compliment. "Organization" is a base word with no business in this context. We organize sales drives, crypto peace movements, jumble sales and the like. What *Katya* boasts is not thematic organization but thematic life. Its tunes and harmonic *formulae*, analogously with the body's organs and networks, are so many channels or centres of aesthetic vitality; of spirit, in short.

What foxes case-hardened ears and *routinier* imaginations is that Janáček's thematic method has nothing in common with Richard Wagner's. Debussy used to complain, not justly but with grains of truth, that the typical Wagner character every time he puts his beard round the prompt wing thrusts his leitmotiv under your nose like a visiting card. Janáček's method is subtler, and needs to be, because his working-scale is smaller. Katya herself has not one visiting card, in Debussy's sense, but (on a rough count) thirteen or fourteen. Actually, of course, there are thirteen or fourteen Katyas, Janáček's heroine being not a fixed quantity or static concept but a creature who, under inner stress, is subject to constant psychic change. Instead of staring at a lithograph we are turning the pages of a book. Generally speaking, each group of Katya themes, having served a given dramatic episode, is discarded for good. Sentimental flashbacks (at this time of day rather a facile dodge) are discouraged. What was valid enough thematically on page two is superseded by page twenty.

Does this make for incoherence? Mr. Newman, in *The Sunday Times*, rather thought it did. Janáček, he complained, is incapable of sticking to one musical idea for more than two or three minutes at a time. Whether a composer changes tack every two minutes, every three minutes or every half-minute is of no consequence whatever. What matters is that his changes of tack shall intelligently complement each other, adding up to a plotted and valid musical course. This, in effect, is what happens throughout *Katya*. In every bar Janáček knows what he's about and where he's going. Each of his six scenes is compactly ordered in a formal sense. Whoever doesn't acknowledge this is either musically illiterate or unacquainted with the score.

In speaking of Katya's thirteen or fourteen personal themes I hope I do not give the impression of a sequence of stick-on labels or *pro-tem* signature tunes. Themes are things a composer discusses. A stick-on label is its own

beginning and end. Instead of discussing it we look the other way. Janáček's thematic discussions are rather hard to spot. As I see it, that is *prima facie* evidence of their quality. Consider the serene music for solo flute with accompaniment of detached chords (Ex. 1a) which we hear when Katya comes on in the opening scene. Although it took me a long time to realize it, the above material in modified forms (Ex. 1b and 1c) is present in the orchestra for quite seventy bars before Katya's actual appearance. Her music goes before, prefiguring her while she approaches, filling young Boris with mystical unease.

The image contains three musical examples from an opera score, labeled Ex. 1a, Ex. 1b, and Ex. 1c. Each example consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the top voice and a bass clef staff for the bottom voice.
 Ex. 1a: The top staff shows a flute playing detached eighth-note chords. The bottom staff shows a piano playing eighth-note chords. The dynamic is marked as *pp dolcissimo*. The flute part has grace notes above the main notes.
 Ex. 1b: The top staff shows a piano playing eighth-note chords. The bottom staff shows a piano playing eighth-note chords. The dynamic is marked as *p*.
 Ex. 1c: The top staff shows a piano playing eighth-note chords. The bottom staff shows a piano playing eighth-note chords. The dynamic is marked as *p*.
 All three examples have a bracket under them and the word "etc." at the end of each staff.

The effect, once you have grasped what Janáček is about, is most moving; but I am quite sure that it passes clean over most heads (as it did over mine) even at a second or third hearing. It would be shortsighted to complain about this. An opera is not up to much which yields all its treasures at first knock.

As the foregoing examples suggest, Janáček does not so much put his themes through the symphonic hoops and over the symphonic hurdles as state them in variant forms, a device which reduces discussion to essentials. The first scene of act two is haunted by a hypnotic, twirling sequence of alternate major thirds and perfect fourths which, as I hear them, symbolize the amorous obsession which is assailing and tragically mastering Katya. The subject occurs under three guises:

The image shows musical example Ex. 2a, consisting of two staves. The top staff is for the piano, showing a repetitive eighth-note pattern in a major key. The bottom staff is for the bassoon, also showing a repetitive eighth-note pattern. The piano part has a dynamic marking of *pp*. The bassoon part has a dynamic marking of *p*. The piano part has a bracket under it and the word "etc." at the end of the staff. The bassoon part has a bracket under it and the word "etc." at the end of the staff.



I do not pretend that each of these variants corresponds with some distinctive streak in Katya's psychology or in the dramatic substance of the scene. Janáček's purpose here is to convey obsession without overreaching himself and incurring musical monotony. Vertically the intervals are always the same: it is the horizontal lines that change—just sufficiently to bring new and revivifying tints from familiar harmonic substance. About "thematic transformation" of this kind there is nothing showy, nothing pedantic, nothing pre-endorsed by the text-books: all we need say is that it is quintessentially musical and of powerful indirect service to the *libretto*.

That Katya is given a chain rather than a central group of themes does not preclude occasional anticipations, advance hints and recurrences. Towards the end of her unforgettable monologue in the second scene of act one, Katya sings (in Norman Tucker's translation), "It is so dreadful a sin to love another man. Who can help me? What will the end be?" At the same time the orchestra enounces a subject which we are to hear restated under different aspects in the love scene of the subsequent act. It is customary for opera composers to introduce their love-themes-in-chief with a great clearing of decks and throats; on such occasions they shush, reiterate and underline. Janáček, on the other hand, seems almost to hope we shall not notice what's happening. He smuggles in his love theme shyly, almost furtively. Ex. 3a, below, is its first statement. Ex. 3b and 3c are two variants utterly opposed in emotional content which we hear in act two, scene two, before and during the lovers' first kiss.

Ex. 3a

A musical score excerpt for orchestra, labeled 'Ex. 3a'. It features two staves. The top staff has a dynamic marking 'p'. The music consists of eighth-note patterns and sustained notes, primarily in the lower register of the instrument.

Ex. 3b

A musical score excerpt for orchestra, labeled 'Ex. 3b'. It features three staves. The top staff has a dynamic marking 'sf'. The middle staff has a dynamic marking 'ff'. The bottom staff shows sustained notes. The music is more rhythmic and dynamic than in Ex. 3a.

Ex. 3a



Another example of recurrence derives from the pulsing major seconds (Ex. 4a) which we hear in the orchestra during the act one monologue when Katya speaks of the conflict between her impulse and her will and of the devil's whisper that is constant in her ear. The same or similar harmonic tints reappear during the love scene sixty pages later (Ex. 4b):

Ex. 4a



Ex. 4b



Allusions and quotations of this kind are so restrained and half-lit that to find them one must go through the score with a small-tooth comb. In the small-tooth comb I am an unrepentant believer. To rejoice intelligently in the whole one must rejoice furiously in the smallest part. Those aesthetes (there are such) who decry the analysis of works they purport to love are mere quacks. In this aspect *Katya* is sound as a bell. It lives up to both small-tooth comb and microscope.

Not that Janáček is subdued and subtle all the time. Occasionally there are massive strokes. When Katya's husband packs his bag at the end of the first act, we are given a stretch of tingling "departure music" which presently becomes loaded and brassy with menace. Husband and wife have reached the end of their way. The orchestra is telling us that what is on the surface a conventional parting is in effect a final sundering, shot with agony and sorrow. Now much the same musical material is used, with astonishing imaginative

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mastery, after the final catastrophe, when Katya's body is carried up on to the Volga quay from which she has thrown herself in despair and mental dissolution. There is the same tingling, the same whip-crack in the orchestra, but this time the parting is a more momentous parting, the journey more dread. The pounding bass which has hitherto leapt a bodeful fourth suddenly hammers out a clinching fifth, which brings the curtain down to a tragic shout of B flat minor.

As an example of the recurring motive I should have thought this as obvious as anything in *Walküre* or *Aida*. Yet at Sadler's Wells even this object lesson seems, in the case of most hearers, to have gone in at one ear and out at the other. The surprising thing is how much we all of us overlook on first contact with a masterpiece. Tunes and structural features which later are as unmistakable as the Skylon simply aren't there at all on first hearing, a phenomenon which accounts for the hilarious comicality of so much “spot” criticism, my own included.

But the difficulty of initially coming to grips is no excuse. In the case of *Katya* the willing mind and the reasonably practised ear gather enough of individuality and high beauty at a first hearing to look with reasonable confidence for more. For my own part, although I missed so much on the night of the Wells *première*, I found myself mentally on my toes even during the opening scene between Boris and Vanya which, although an otherwise enthusiastic colleague* finds it “conventional”, has a highly original musical text. The first real landmark was Katya's monologue in the second scene, to which reference has already been made: it was instantly evident that this is not only a main pillar of the score but also one of the most challenging pages of musical portraiture in operatic literature.

There are touches in the love music which sound naive, almost neo-Weberian, to begin with; much less so, I think, when related to their context and above all to Katya's personality. Sweetness is mitigated by strength. A harmonic idiom which, for the romantic aspects of the story, draws on Tchaikovsky and early Strauss, not to mention Dvořák and Smetana, makes skilful use for other expressional purposes of modalism and the whole-tone scale, the latter in a vein which recalls not so much Debussy as certain of Sibelius' moods. Here and there we get a superb harshness. One detail always makes me catch my breath even in the piano score. I refer to the stuttering, brassy figure



which sounds against a soft pattern of choral voices “off” during Katya's final sorrowing. The effect is tearing and peremptory. Death's finger seems to beckon. The terror and beauty of this detail are in themselves sufficient to

* Paul Hamburger, *Music Survey*, June, 1951.

establish Janáček's technical *bonafides*. A man who can conceive a master-stroke of this kind could not possibly be the muddle-headed, short-winded amateur we read about in certain critical quarters. On this point, for the rest, the score as a whole is conclusive: it is controlled craftsmanship (as well as finer things) all the way.

Is *Katya*, then, the entire and perfect chrysolite? Far from it. Janáček's special talent, as shown in this work, at any rate, is for music which runs neck and neck with *inner* conflict. Physical action, of which we have samples in the confession and suicide scenes, makes him restive. What's the point, he seems to ask impatiently, of all this running about when the only thing that truly matters is what goes on in men's minds and hearts? Still, running about there has to be; the theatre cannot well get on without it. In *Katya* the physical happenings are confused, untidy, almost ludicrous. There's nothing much the producer can do about this, I imagine: the defects of act three arise because Janáček found the external world and its goings on rather a bore. For real music-drama in Janáček's sense we must turn once more to Katya's monologues (she has a second big *scena* before committing suicide). Nothing happens outwardly, but once you are attuned to the music everything is pure theatre, with each gesture, every square inch of paint, every watt of lamplight playing its part.

There has been some lament that in *Katya* there's not a single *aria*. Nor is there for that matter in the whole of *Pelléas*, most of *Wozzeck* and a vast acreage of Strauss and Wagner. On this point Janáček has refused to compromise, for compromise would have been ruinous. *Katya* is a shortish work divided into six scenes: chopping and changing between melodic recitative on the one hand and *arias* and formal *ensembles* on the other would have left the characters with no room to turn round. Janáček's solution is a continuous orchestral commentary which indisputably bears the main musical burden, plus a vocal line designed to convey the words lucidly in recitative patterns which, though shapely and interesting enough in their own terms, never distract the ear from the orchestral exposition. The vocal line, in other words, never approaches autonomy. On the other hand, it never approaches the utilitarian gabble which disfigures so many pages of *Elektra*, for example. A minor characteristic, especially in Katya's part, is the superimposing of vocal phrases in common time, or in irregular groupings (fives, for example) upon triple measures in the orchestra. Evidently it is necessary to understand the Czech text before we can relish such niceties to the full, but even in English they are not to be despised.

The romantic tints and surgings of Janáček's orchestra sometimes push him willy-nilly towards great lyrical outbursts of precisely the sort he has on principle foresworn. A case in point is the crucial entry of Boris in the last scene. This is attended by a great orchestral stoking-up which in Tchaikovsky, for example, would have denoted a ten- or twenty-page duet for the lovers. Instead of anchoring himself melodiously in G flat, Janáček lets the voice parts subside and peter out. The result is undeniably anticlimactic. Here is a fascinating glimpse of the technical dilemmas in which a composer may

involve himself when striking out on a path of his own. But the vocal writing of *Katya* is for the most part satisfying enough. With those who wish to revive the *da capo aria* in contemporary terms I am in lively sympathy: but there are right contexts and wrong contexts for this purpose, and *Katya* is emphatically among the wrong ones.

To conclude. Every technical objection levelled at *Katya* by the Sadler's Wells critics can be comfortably refuted by anybody who spends half a day with the score. That the work can ever mean much to the big *aria*-hunting public is exceedingly doubtful. What one must lament, however, is that it should have been torpedoed by the so-called specialists: another case of *trahison des clercs* in music.

The Fifth Quartet of Béla Bartók

BY

ROGER E. CHAPMAN

IN the study of the music of Béla Bartók, perhaps the best cross-sectional view of his development, of his uses of thematic material, of his structural ideas, lies in the music of the six string quartets. Covering a thirty year span, they serve to exemplify as well as any group of his works the personal elements in his music.

John Weissmann, writing in *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, has found it expedient to divide Bartók's music into three periods of composition.¹ It is into the last of the three, the so-called "Synthesis" period, that the fifth string Quartet falls. It was written in 1934 at a time when Bartók's concern was not only with a rigorous kind of linear writing, but with structural considerations; and, as we shall see, it is these elements that are most striking in the fifth Quartet. With regard to the contrapuntal devices, we shall see the importance here of the use of inversion; as to structure, we shall find that the disposition of tonal centres is as important as the formal aspects. Although it is the function of the thematic material to define the total structure, there is added a clear tonal relationship to make the definition sharper.

Despite the frequent experimentation that appears in this Quartet (the kind of experimentation that goes hand in hand with a composer's personal development in expressivity, and not simply the blind sort that seeks novel effects), there is a close relationship to the other works, comprising the ingredients of Bartókian flavour. The employment of five movements in dramatic juxtaposition forms a part also of the fourth string Quartet (six years before) and the Concerto for Orchestra of nearly ten years later. The use of the tones of the thematic material in well-spaced chord formations—what Milton Babbitt, writing in *The Musical Quarterly*, calls "serialization"—appears as early as the second string Quartet, and serves as an integrative method, much as it does for the writers of the "twelve-tone" school.² There is perhaps less of sudden changes of mood here than in the earlier works, for contrasts exist for the most part between the larger sections; yet during the some twenty-seven minutes of playing time, the character ranges from wild exuberance to stern meditation.

The string technique is here as demanding as in much of the other works, requiring of the players considerable technical skill. The appearance of the *glissando* is frequent enough to be called an idiosyncrasy, reaching a certain height (at the close of the fourth movement) when the cello is required to perform the *glissando* on triple stops; and it is combined with the trill at one point in the final movement. The hard *pizzicato* that bounces off the fingerboard is common enough in Bartók's writing, but his use of it in the second movement adds in a remarkable way to the eerie fascination.

¹ Weissmann, John S., "Béla Bartók: An Estimate", *MUSIC REVIEW*, VII (1946), 221-241.

² Babbitt, Milton, "The String Quartets of Bartók", *The Musical Quarterly*, XXXV (1949), 377-385.

The most striking feature of the five movements is their interrelationship in forming what may be described as an "arch". The first movement is clearly in the sonata-allegro form, but is reordered internally to show a strong relationship to the rondo-like fifth movement. The second and fourth movements are akin in their ornamental elements as well as melodic ideas. The third movement is in ternary form, the symmetry of which underscores its central position in the arch.

It is the form of the first movement that hints at this "arch" idea for the whole Quartet, for one finds that the main themes of the exposition in the sonata-allegro form are inverted and reversed for the recapitulation, producing a remarkable symmetry before and after the development section. This sort of arrangement may not be unique, but it does show the extent of Bartók's preoccupation with form.

There should be emphasized at this point the important rôle the semi-octave, that is, both the diminished fifth and the augmented fourth (six semitones), plays in this movement, even in the Quartet as a whole. Pairs of tones six semitones apart are thrown into opposition, often with the same relationship as tonic and dominant in earlier music. The exposition, which opens on B flat, ends on a chord of the dominant. The development immediately starts on E, the semi-octave of B flat, but closes with the superposition of the dominant, F, on the semi-octave, E. The recapitulation begins with this same "chord", eventually leading back to the tonic, B flat. The semi-octave plays a large part in the harmonies, and at some points, in the melodic line.

To separate the sections of the first movement, to make identification surer, Bartók has used a "motto theme" that demands attention with its reiterated notes (Ex. 1). The motto theme in addition gives a strong indication of the

Ex. 1
1st Mov't., Meas. 1

tonality at important points. The Quartet opens with this theme on B flat, immediately followed by themes A₁ and A₂, which are pursued canonically (Ex. 2 and 3). It is the second of these, A₂, that is treated extensively enough to be called the "principal theme".

Ex. 2
Meas. 4. Theme A₁

Ex. 3
Meas. 8. Theme A₂

A quieter transition succeeds the B flat opening, and the tonal centre (determined from the motion of the bass line) shifts downwards by half-steps gradually, until, introduced by the motto theme on C sharp and D, the secondary theme appears, on a C pedal, at measure 25 (Ex. 4).

Ex. 4 Meas. 25

This has a vigorous syncopation, which continues, *ostinato*-like, until interrupted by the motto theme, also on C. The remainder of the exposition, from measure 45, is occupied by a closing theme, a quiet chromatic melody that undulates in triplets. The theme appears in the various voices successively, sometimes lengthened and with intervals altered. A pedal on A sounds throughout the fourteen measures, accompanied by another pedal, rising gradually from B flat chromatically to E, on which the development opens.

The first section of the development, following the strident motto theme, is occupied by close fugal imitation based on material from theme A₁ accompanied by minor sevenths with the motto rhythm. In section 2 (at measure 86) the lower two voices carry the *ostinato* rhythm of the secondary theme on G, while in octaves above is heard the principal theme (Ex. 5). Important in the cello

Ex. 5 Meas. 86

part is the interval of the semi-octave. After eleven measures of this, the parts are exchanged, the lower voices taking the principal theme, and the upper playing the *ostinato* pattern, now on G sharp. The remainder of the development treats further of the principal theme in varied form (Ex. 6), until a mechanically repeated motive brings the section to a close.

The motto theme announces the recapitulation, which unfolds with the themes in reverse order to that of the exposition, with the addition that each is inverted. The closing theme appears first, with its triplets, and has now an



accompanying pedal on F sharp plus a second pedal that moves downward chromatically from F sharp to C sharp. The secondary theme, which was rhythmic in character, finds its inversion in having the cello and viola take the parts allotted earlier to the violins. This section centres about A flat, which shows a symmetry about B flat with its earlier appearance in the exposition on C. After the motto theme is again heard on B flat, the varied form of the principal subject is treated canonically. The *coda* from measure 177 consists of a rapid piling up of motives, in which a kind of mirroring plays a great part. The first movement is, then, in itself suggestive of the arch form.

The mood of the movement is one of dramatic urgency. There is, despite a few quieter sections, a feeling of expanding the string quartet medium to symphonic proportions. The stridence of the opening motto and the principal theme is matched by the vitality of the *ostinato*-like second theme. There is a heightening of interest by frequent use of *stretto* with fragments of melody. These melodic fragments are characterized by chromatic lines that often double back upon themselves, in sinuous motion. The harmonies are primarily governed by the melodic progressions, assuming a considerable richness and variety in the interplay of voices.

The second movement, marked *adagio molto*, is in a simple three-part form, with introduction and postlude, a peaceful change from the opening movement. The introduction is primarily a contrast of ranges and timbres of the instruments. Isolated trills and pairs of tones are spaced through a wide range. The following section is formed by a succession of sonorous and full chords; simple triads and seventh chords follow one another in chorale fashion. Above them, in peaceful manner, moves a highly expressive melody in the first violin.

The middle portion has a hushed expectancy to it. The persistent *tremolo* on the low G of the violin is accompanied by a notated *glissando* of five notes, and a *pizzicato*, steady as a drum beat. For five measures the semi-octave relationship G-D flat is strong. This gives way to a rising melody treated canonically and full of leaps of a fourth, while the everpresent *glissando* purrs on (Ex. 7). After a return to the chorale-like section, which is shortened considerably, the postlude presents the widely scattered trills of the opening, fading away with a quasi-*glissando* downward in the cello.

There is a harmonic variety in this movement which in part governs the character, and links the movement to its counterpart, the fourth movement. Whereas the opening and closing sections use the interval of the third, both major and minor, the serenity of the chorale-like section is obtained from its simple triads. And the middle portion is formed harmonically as well as melodically by intervals of the fourth.

The central movement is a scherzo, in simple song-form with trio. What give it its true character are the Bulgarian rhythms. The opening portion has

Ex. 7

2nd Mov't., Meas. 35



its 9 eighth-notes to the bar noted as $\frac{4+2+3}{8}$. As set forth in *pizzicato* chords in the cello, this rhythm appeals greatly to the listener's kinesthetic sense. The trio has a different set of accents, being written in $\frac{3+2+2+3}{8}$ time.

The first section is tripartite. The bulk of the interest lies in the treatment of the one-measure *arpeggio* theme with its one-measure "answer" (Ex. 8).

Ex. 8

3rd Mov't., Meas. 3



These patterns appear in the various voices, being treated in much the same way as the motive of a Bach chorale-prelude. Relief is offered in a counter-subject at measure 24, very lively in character (Ex. 9). The whole section centres about the key of C sharp.

Ex. 9

Meas. 24



The trio, played muted, is strung out on a soprano *ostinato*. The one-measure pattern lasts almost the whole 65 measures (Ex. 10). Originally

Ex. 10

Meas. 67



starting on F, it is transposed up by half steps from time to time, until at the point of highest interest it is pitched a major third higher, at which time three of the instruments are playing the pattern, in inversion or in another transposed form. Superimposed on this, and in the same range is a very simple peasant

melody which the viola plays. In the given metre, this melody has a free-flowing, improvised character. There is a modal quality to the tune, with a tonal cadence. The reappearance of an augmented form of the *arpeggio* theme of section 1 closes the trio, although the weird *ostinato* pattern persists to the end.

Section 3 brings back the material of the first part with some slight changes. The *stretto* of the *coda* shows a familiar device of Bartók's for heightening interest and summing up the material. And at many points in this movement are examples of his making a repeated *ostinato*-like figure act as cadential material (Ex. 11). The whole movement has a clearly marked peasant feeling,

Ex. 11



due in the main to the rhythms as well as the character of the melodies. The word "melody" is *à propos* because the treatment is not so decidedly an extension of thematic material as a simple expression of "tunes".

The *andante* which forms the fourth movement bears a relationship to the second movement. The trills are now written out; the *glissando*, notated before, is now indicated by a slanting line (Ex. 12). As will be seen in Ex. 13,



Ex. 13



melodic material is also derivative. The form, tri-partite, is essentially dictated by the dramatic elements, for the quiet mood of the opening gradually gives way to an impassioned *fortissimo* which subsides to the tranquil close. Another

interesting comparison, shown in Ex. 14, can be made between the rhythmic use of chords in measures 23 to 39 here and the chorale-like section in the second movement, measures 10 to 25.

Ex. 14



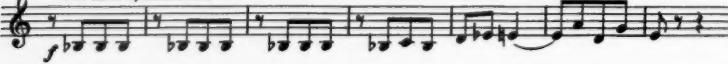
2nd Mov't., Meas. 10



The finale is full of driving and churning motion. In form it recalls the opening movement. It has two themes, both extended at great length. The central portion, comparable to the development section of the sonata-allegro form, consists here of a fugue based upon a new version of the themes of the first movement labelled A₁ and A₂ (Ex. 15).

Ex. 15

5th Mov't., Meas. 380



The melodic material, almost entirely in eighth-notes, is predominantly scalewise, emphasizing by means of rhythmic accent the interval of the semi-octave and the perfect fourth. The forward drive of this movement is to be found in many of the later works of Bartók: it is akin to that of the final movement of the third piano Concerto and to that of the close of the Concerto for Orchestra. The same relief, though momentary, is found in the fugal treatment in the middle of these related movements. They are cast from the same mould. But, whereas the melodic material of the fugue that appears in the last movement of the Concerto for Orchestra is made up of leaps as well as

scale-wise passages, the material in the fifth string Quartet consists of a short motive covering a range of six semitones.

The diminished triad plays a part harmonically—but it is, of course, simply the semi-octave with the third filled in. What is remarkable about the treatment of themes is the extent to which contrapuntal devices are applied. Employing inverted forms and retrograde forms, together with transpositions, Bartók seems to have explored the possibilities of combinations with greatest imagination. And to leave no point of the interpretation unclear, he has noted with great care every alteration of dynamics or *tempo*, however slight, making what might have wavered and collapsed now flow like molten metal.

Like the first movement, this movement has its motto theme that announces the various sections (Ex. 16). The theme that engenders most of the movement is stated after the motto (Ex. 17). The portion labelled *B₁* affords a



concentration of contrapuntal devices. The secondary theme which first appears at measure 202 supplies an extra fund of energy, and the steady eighth-note motion persists until the fugue subject quoted in Ex. 15 enters at measure 370. The two main themes reappear in a recapitulation, but the *coda* is delayed by a curious little *allegretto* section at measure 699, a barrel-organ tune, to be played *con indifferenza*. Then the whirlwind recommences, rushing to its conclusion.

The fifth Quartet can hardly be called ingratiating. It is stern and formidable, not given to "tunefulness", although there is a bow in that direction with the scherzo. Much of its success lies in its continual forward drive. Even in the more subdued moments there is an undercurrent of unrest, of tension that threatens to burst. Yet with all this vitality, it seems far from the savagery of the early works. The rhapsodic element is held in close rein, ruled by a stringent ordering of structural and melodic elements.

Each page has the mark of individuality as exists in few other string quartets since Beethoven. It is an engrossing personality.

as be
Quart

Arnold Schönberg

BY

HANS F. REDLICH

THE death of Arnold Schönberg in his 77th year has robbed contemporary music of its most controversial personality. It is a sad reflection on the cruel instability of modern cultural conditions, that he too shared the sorry fate of so many of his distinguished colleagues—Bartók, de Falla, Rachmaninov and Kurt Weill among them—to die in exile. Like his compatriot and friend Gustav Mahler (who did his best to smooth the thorny path of the budding composer) Schönberg was an Austrian Jew with little consciousness of his racial peculiarities and with an unbounded confidence in his ultimate ability to become assimilated into the German cultural orbit. He was born in 1874 into the Vienna of Brahms and Bruckner, and it is very significant for this latest exponent of the ancient Viennese tradition that his first steps as a composer express the clear tendency to reconcile the hitherto antagonistic techniques of Wagner and Brahms.

The greatest part of Schönberg's life was spent in the musical centres of Vienna and Berlin alternately, where he gradually developed from a self-taught amateur into the head of a famous school of composers and theoreticians and lastly even into a veritable Professor at the Berlin "Akademie der Künste". The advent of Hitler turned the ageing artist of sixty into a refugee from racial persecution. In 1934 Schönberg established himself afresh in the United States, learning to master the English language in rather an unconventional manner, occupying honourable professorships in Boston and California, eventually becoming an American citizen and spending his last years in academic retirement, yet unflagging in creative energy. His early years in Vienna were notorious for the many concert scandals flaring up in connection with first performances of his works. But even in later life he seemed always involved in acrimonious polemics and sensational controversies, as in the most recent case of "Thomas Mann versus Arnold Schönberg". He was twice married: first to a sister of his only teacher and early friend Alexander von Zemlinsky and later to a sister of the distinguished violinist Rudolf Kolisch, one of the finest interpreters of Schönberg's chamber music. That Schönberg's compositions, having left such a deep imprint on the minds and works of his contemporaries, continue to arouse heated arguments is perhaps partly due to the fact that their performances have remained rare events. They are not easy to assess in their entirety even to-day. In the subtle change of their methods and techniques they faithfully reflect the transitional and chaotic state of music throughout the present century. The early works of his "first period" (1899–1910) are deeply indebted to the chromatic *espressivo* of Wagner's *Tristan* style, as may be seen from the following juxtaposition of a *Tristan* motif and its thematic derivative taken from Schönberg's first string Quartet, Op. 7:

Ex. 1 WAGNER: *Tristan*, Act III (1859)



SCHÖNBERG: String Quartet in D, op. 7 (1905)



But they are no less intimately linked up with the compositional processes of Brahms,

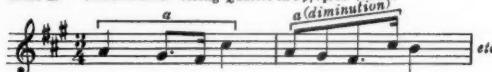
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as becomes evident from the structure of the principal motif of Schönberg's second string Quartet, Op. 10:

Ex. 2 SCHÖNBERG: String Quartet in F#, op. 10 (1908)

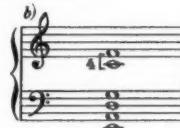


These links with post-classical tradition seem counterbalanced by an early tendency to dethrone the tonal cadence and its functional consequences. Schönberg achieved a gradual "a-tonicalization" of his music most ingeniously by (1) introducing harmonies based on fourths instead of on the traditional interval of the third. This occurs for the first time methodically in the first *Kammersymphonie*, Op. 9, where the thematic sequel of fourths:

Ex. 3 SCHÖNBERG: Kammersymphonie, op. 9 (1907)



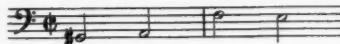
ultimately results in chordal growths such as:



(2) championing a vocal line of slightly indeterminate pitch, the so-called "Sprechstimme", hovering midway between singing and musically accentuated recitation, an acoustic phenomenon cropping up already in the *Gurrelieder* (Melodram "Des Sommerwindes wilde Jagd"), largely determining the style of *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912) and finally used in two of the most celebrated works of Schönberg's old age: the *Ode to Napoleon* (1942) and *A survivor from Warsaw* (1947). A somewhat paradoxical feature of this "first period" is the fact that, while Schönberg conceived his *Gurrelieder* as well as his only symphonic poem *Pelleas und Mélisande* in the exuberant language of Wagner and Liszt, using in both cases an orchestra of mammoth proportions, he simultaneously created the modern chamber orchestra and applied the principles of Liszt's symphonic poem in one movement to the medium of chamber music. The string Sextet *Verklärte Nacht* is based on a poem by Richard Dehmel, while the string Quartet, Op. 10, contains a scherzo the trio of which is thematically based on the ancient Viennese ditty "O du lieber Augustin", as well as two songs composed on words by Stefan George. It is in the last movement of the latter opus that Schönberg first sets out to create music based on the principle of tone-rows rather than on the diatonic scale. The "second period", ushered in by the famous *Drei Klavierstücke*, Op. 11, is characterized by destructive tendencies rather than by new constructive ideas. It is the period of deliberate "atonality", shedding the fetters of sonata-form and of tonal cadence, resulting in music of microcosmic proportions and aphoristic brevity. Its main work is the *Erwartung*, Op. 17, a poignant soliloquy of a woman abandoned by her faithless lover, whose dead body she ultimately finds. The singer, excelling in Schönberg's favourite intervals of the seventh and ninth, is accompanied by a many-tongued orchestra of magical brilliance and unrestricted eloquence. A turning-point is reached with *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 21, in which for the first time in Schönberg's development the constructive principle of strict counterpoint (cf. the passacaglia of No. 8 and the cancrizans motion in No. 17) is introduced into the welter of free atonality. Between Op. 22, the last of the second period, and Op. 23, the first work written in dodecaphonic style, there is a gap of nearly ten years. This is in itself a significant parallel to Beethoven's creative development which passed through a similar trough between 1813 and 1817.

In those intermediate years Schönberg began to evolve a new system of composition and to plan theoretical works on a vast scale. After his famous treatise on harmony (1911), which presents him as a master of lucid German prose, he drafted other theoretical books as well as *libretti* to several oratorios and operas. He even turned to painting for a short time in his craving to find new means of expression. The third period of his creative life was largely determined by the new principle of the twelve note row. In itself this was not new. Beethoven had experimented with a four note row in his last quartets:

Ex. 4 BEETHOVEN: String Quartet, op. 132 (see also op. 130 and 133)



Verdi had designed a "scala enigmatica" for one of the *Quattro pezzi sacri* and Josef Mathias Hauer (born 1883) had established a system of dodecaphonic composition and even a "Zwölftonschrift" which had undisputable claims to priority. But it is equally evident that the principle of composition based on twelve note rows only developed into a pliable medium after Schönberg had taken it in hand. The new technique had a profound influence on some of his most brilliant disciples, like Alban Berg and Anton von Webern, as well as on outsiders like Ernst Kfenek. In the works composed after 1924 strict counterpoint as well as the patterns of sonata and suite stage a surprising come-back. The music of these works is organized down to the minutest thematic detail and constructed with the ingenuity of a mathematical mastermind.

In later years Schönberg occasionally reverted to the processes of his tonal period (second chamber Symphony, 1940), thereby displaying an elasticity of mind in pleasant contrast to the fanaticism of some of his doctrinaire followers. Among his greater compositions of that period are the operas *Von Heute auf Morgen* (1933) on the *libretto* of Max Blonda and *Moses und Aron* on his own *libretto*. He worked on the latter for nearly 30 years, completing it only quite recently. The poem of his musically unfinished oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter* as well as a highly interesting volume of collected essays in English (*Style and Idea*, 1950) should also be mentioned in this connection. Several treatises on problems of harmony and counterpoint (issued in English) as well as a great number of compositions for chamber music combinations and for orchestra add to the picture of an indefatigable artist and thinker carrying on undaunted by the handicap of a foreign language or by the physical discomfitures of old age.

It is perhaps too early to evaluate the rich harvest of Schönberg's late years. Frequent and good performances will be necessary to determine the kind of relationship existing between the strange and forbidding creations of the mature artist and the more accessible compositions dating from before 1914. Schönberg's peculiar inclination towards theorizing may or may not have sapped his creative powers in the years of decision. Yet it is an undeniable fact that his later works seem to be more the products of a speculative mind of demonic penetration than creations of a divinatory genius.

It was left to his friend and pupil Alban Berg to write *Wozzeck*, the unique music drama, which alone may one day represent Schönberg's own innermost striving to distant generations. Despite the great lyrical beauty of many an early song of Schönberg, it is Berg's deeply inspired and naturally grown music that has captivated modern audiences. Many famous musicians of the twentieth century—among them Puccini, Ravel, Stravinsky, Wellesz, Casella, Malipiero—have gladly testified their debt of gratitude to the man whose uncompromising logic and bold analysis has undoubtedly widened the musical horizon of the age. Will Schönberg ultimately share the fate of C. P. E. Bach in his relationship to the Viennese Classics? No one knows. However, Schönberg's personal courage and intellectual honesty, his never ceasing creative curiosity, his spirit of adventure in the realm of art, and his perseverance against odds will surely be held up as a paragon to future generations of artists, for whom the problems of yesterday will have become by then the commonplaces of to-morrow.

Cecil Gray

BY

RICHARD GORER

THE contemptuous silence with which the death of Cecil Gray has been greeted forms a suitable ending to a life devoted to music. The brief announcements of his demise describe Cecil as a writer of books on music, although to say this is to distort the facts almost comically. In fact Cecil Gray was a composer who had, in the course of his career, written several books. Unfortunately, except on one occasion, his music has been unheard and none of it is published. There are of course reasons for this state of affairs and excuses can be found for all of us for tolerating such a situation, but when all has been said, the fact remains that one of the most powerful opera composers of our day has never had one of his works performed on the stage and it is possible that some of the most significant music of the last twenty years may be lost for ever.

This is scarcely the place to insist on Gray's pre-eminence as a composer. Those who heard the broadcast of *The Women of Troy* with ears unprejudiced by the legend of Cecil Gray the ferocious critic will know what I mean. There is no general agreement as to its merit but it is possible to assert with confidence that Gray could communicate through the medium of music to a degree not easily paralleled by any of his contemporaries.

If this is so, it may be asked by some naïve reader, why was his life as a composer so conspicuous a failure? The reasons are numerous and mostly discreditable. In the first place no-one took less trouble to publicize his works than the composer. They were not—except on one occasion—offered to publishers, the scores were shown only to those who took the trouble to enquire: and not always then, if the enquirer was unsympathetic. Moreover it must be admitted that his masterpiece, *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, was quite impractical. The enormous orchestra and elaborate scenic devices demanded an expenditure that no theatre could contemplate for a work by an unknown composer, however convinced of its worth the management might be. (There is no reason to suppose they ever were.) *The Women of Troy*, on the other hand, apart from its inconvenient length—it would require to be preceded or followed by a one-act opera—is entirely suitable for any opera house and other reasons must be sought for its rejection. Here personalities intervened. In the interval between the creation of a work of art and its presentation to the public a vast number of axe-grinders manage to acquire a livelihood. Most of these seem to find it necessary to indulge in activities which the more austere among us are liable to regard with dislike and contempt. Intrigue, backbiting, slander, vilification and misrepresentation appear to be essential to any contemporary musical production and in the world of opera these are dilated to suitably operatic dimensions. Cecil, though well aware of the state of affairs, did not like it. It irked him that artists of talent should be forced to kowtow to those whose chief claim to fame appeared to be an ability to persuade others to share their own high opinion of themselves. Moreover he made no secret of his feelings and, as it is impossible to indulge in the activities that have been mentioned without becoming malicious as well, it is not surprising that Gray's music, to put it mildly, was not encouraged.

But where his music met with no encouragement his prose did. As a musical journalist Cecil was in demand. Lucid, immensely readable, outspoken, and with a most happy gift of imagery, he was in a class of his own. But he wrote all the time as a composer and with a composer's prejudices. To those unaware of this, some of his judgments appeared to be wilfully shocking. To give one instance his characterization of Schubert as a flabby composer seems wildly inept. In later life he did modify several of his more severe strictures, but, as he ruefully observed, once you have printed an opinion you are stuck with it. At the same time it must be recognized that, owing to his never taking anything for granted, the reversal of generally held opinions in his *History of Music* that

irritated so many critics was more often justified than not. In the case of the great polyphonic writers particularly, the majority of music historians had continued repeating the statements of their predecessors without troubling to see if they were justified. Some of them have not yet forgiven Gray for pointing this out.

As a disciple of Bernard van Dieren Gray had perhaps an exaggerated respect for fluent counterpoint; but unlike his master and other resolute contrapuntists he did not think that the combination of melodies was an end in itself but required that the melodies should have their own quality. He was one of the earliest champions of Bellini at a time when that composer was thought beneath the consideration of serious musicians. In the same way his insistence that music should be more formal and less rhapsodic than so much twentieth-century music led to his championship of Sibelius. Indeed in a period when Busoni's demand for a New Classicism was being fulfilled, Gray, almost alone, possessed the temperament and equipment of a classic artist. His insistence, rare in a British composer, on perfect musical form, and the necessity he felt for some external discipline, aligns him to some extent with Berg, who also leaned on conventional forms though with unconventional results. The essential difference between them does not lie in the fact that Berg was a chromatic composer, while Gray was diatonic, but in the fact that Berg was a professional composer, while Gray, perhaps owing to lack of encouragement, was always the inspired amateur. He is of the line of Borodin, of Mussorgsky and of Chabrier; endowed with the greatest musical gifts, but not dependent on these for a living and so disinclined to compose for any save the highest purposes. This is doubtless a noble attitude, but it is not one that the contemporary British composer can adopt with impunity if he wishes his work to be performed. Nowadays the composer must realize that he is a tradesman like everyone else, that he must employ the recognized channels to sell his goods and that the customer is always right. Such an attitude was not possible for Gray and both he and we have to suffer for it.

Of his compositions there exist in manuscript at the present time three operas: *Deirdre*, *The Temptation of St. Anthony* and *The Women of Troy*, a symphonic *Prelude* for orchestra, and a setting of three Italian poems for chorus and orchestra, called by the composer a *Choral Triptych*. Shortly before his death he told me of plans for an oratorio, *The Harrowing of Hell*, but I fear that this had not progressed far before his last illness overtook him.

First Performances

THE ECLECTICISM OF "WOZZECK"

(1) Copland, Concerto for clarinet and string orchestra (with harp and piano).
(2) Antony Hopkins, *Five Studies* for mixed chorus and piano. (3) Newell Wallbank, violin Sonata, Op. 31. (4) Alan Bush, Symphonic Suite: *Piers Plowman's Day*. (5) Fricker, Symphony No. 1. (6) Bloch, Scherzo *Fantasque* for piano and orchestra. (7) Lutyens, *Nativity* (W. R. Rodgers) for soprano and string orchestra. (8) Frank Martin, *Ariel* for mixed chorus. (9) Britten, *Five Flower Songs*, Op. 47, for mixed chorus.
(10) Frankel, *Three Poems* for cello and piano. (11) Berg, *Wozzeck*.

COPLAND's clarinet Concerto (1947-48), whose first English performance with Thurston as soloist was conducted by the composer, centres diatonically and pandiatonically upon C major. The simple forms of the two movements (ternary and rondo respectively) are connected by a thematic *cadenza* which, owing to its structural position and its anticipation of the 2nd movement, represents one of the latest steps in the functionalization of this section whose purpose it enriches, and whose level of tension it raises, by adding to its retarding and retrospective element the opposite one of preparation. The centre of gravity lies in the first movement which is at the same time the more completely satisfactory of the two, showing not only wide harmonic breadth but even a lyricism of, for Copland, extraordinary melodic invention. It is only with the *cadenza* that once again his tendency gains the upper hand to use figured chords in general and triads in particular as surrogates in matters melodic, although, being a real composer, he makes an often inspired rhythmic and harmonic virtue of his melodic needs. Nevertheless, the second movement is somewhat narrow-minded harmonically, with clashes that evince no other purpose than to clash. In his admirably straightforward programme note, Copland mentions this movement's "unconscious fusion of elements obviously related to North and South American music" and especially "a phrase from a currently popular Brazilian tune, heard by the composer in Rio", but in more subtly interesting addition, a jazzy sentence in dotted quavers with syncopations over common time's strong beats, and off-beats in the bass, makes its saxophone-like appearance in the ennobling clarinet part. (One hopes that Benny Goodman, who commissioned the work and to whom it is dedicated, plays it as imaginatively as he plays jazz, rather than as dryly and academically as he plays Mozart's Quintet and Concerto.) The accompanying body is typical of Copland in its economy of instrumental resources and its clean texture. Altogether, this "Sonatina Concertante" (as we should like to call it) reflects a deeply sympathetic creative mind which has gone through a great deal of trouble and has emerged untriumphantly mature, kind and resigned. The Hopkins, on the other hand, is yet another of this highly talented composer's infantile jokes, pathetic in its apparent belief that it has French lightness and wit to offer. It is time Hopkins either stopped or started composing. Nor can Wallbank's Sonata, again a talent's, be called grown-up, though even where bad it does not enervate because it is careful not to assume above its station, which is that of a straight and conservative first (sonata) movement with the 2nd subject in the dominant's relative minor (the tonic being G minor) and, when recapitulated, in the tonic minor; an *adagio* which rises to a higher level of harmonic intensification (because a lower one would not sustain the movement at that speed), but settles down on the tonic's Neapolitan sixth before proceeding home to the tonic major's relative minor; an unpretentious, somewhat pitifully retrospective minuet in the subdominant major, thematically integrated with the opening movement; and a finale in G whose first episode ventures to the other end of the circle of fifths (D \flat). The work was performed at one of Nicholas Choveaux' enterprising recitals (RBA Galleries) which merit attention. Alan Bush's allegedly symphonic Suite (1946-47) does not suffer from the over-integration of his *Nottingham Symphony*, nor, on the other hand, is it as musical, as intelligent, and as revolutionary as he. Its pronounced primitivism and ye olde musyk are not in fact everyone's cup of water, and more than

once one stares aghast at the gap between the archaic and the intellectual that is bridged by the magic word contemporaneity. Even at its worst, however, the Suite still upholds those minimal standards of competence which nowadays need propagating, while at its none too frequent best it is inspired. Texturally it is completely heard through (for better or worse). The same cannot always be said of Fricker's first Symphony (1949), which has now received its first London performance at the Albert Hall's summer festival where, I hope for the right realistic reasons, you are allowed to smoke. In any case it was for the wrong reasons that a considerable percentage of what in all likelihood is, *in corpore*, the most idiotic audience in the world promenaded out of the hall between the movements, with the result that in the end I found myself clapping, for the wrong reasons and right motives, a work which I disliked. The stupid lowbrow's rejection of the Symphony is matched by the stupid highbrow's enthusiasm for it. They both react to what they wrongly think is its contemporaneity, while the real, though unconscious, cause of the highbrow's enthusiasm is that the piece is not contemporary. Both rhythmically and (in outline) melodically, and in statement as well as treatment, you can foresee too much because you have heard it all before (you were born), whereas harmonically you can foresee too little because the idiom is so busy contemporizing the old material and methods that it can't look after its own consistency. It is only in certain transitions that it finds itself free to convey a trace of the real Fricker, who has meanwhile continued emerging and will one time break out, it is to be hoped, in full blaze, accompanied maybe by an obituary notice on his music in *The Times*, which at the time of writing is thrilled by his chewing the cud, possibly because it was never sufficiently thrilled by the original food. The whole situation of the Fricker Symphony shows the unconscious swindle of which much of our disrupted and aesthetically corrupt age's musical life consists. It is only where thought and feeling are skin-deep that a programme-noter can write, "This very personal, intense and original Symphony is music to absorb rather than to analyse" and keep the audience's faces straight, for unless one rejects the analytical approach altogether, absorability can never exclude, but on the contrary demands, analysis. The new Bloch, finished in December, 1948, "as is usual with me, after an incubation of several years", comes as a pleasant surprise after the *Concerto Symphonique* (see *First Performances*, November, 1949): it is far more original, and terser. True, the piano style is still heavy, the orchestral texture still thick, but the defects have changed into characteristics. The harmonic atmosphere, moreover, while markedly less tense than in Bloch's earlier music, is intenser than in the more exclusively post-romantic piano Concerto, even submitting to atonal influences at points of critical tension. At more reposeful moments, Bloch's Jewish style emerges in terms of exotic modality; in addition, the virile tune (wrongly characterized as "almost savage" in the programme note) growing out of the Scherzo's initial thematic material in the second of its three continuous sections gives prominence to distinctly Jewish folkloristic turns of phrase. The first world performance of the work took place last December at a Bloch Festival in Chicago, with Ida Frehm as soloist and the 70-year-old composer himself conducting. Lutyens' ternary form, with wonderfully clear contrapuntal texture, is more "-tonal" than "pan-"; in fact, it's in C minor. The Martin, on the other hand, is more "-temporary" than "con-"; aiming far and shooting nowhere in particular, it reminds one of one of those respectable film scores which make the Sunday press' film critics write of a "remarkable sound track". Again a minimal standard of competence is reached; the texture in general and its *a cappella* treatment in particular can teach many much. The work is dedicated to Felix de Nobel and his Nederlands Kamerkoor, by whom it was performed. The composer enjoys an enormous reputation on the Continent. The Britten (composed 1950, published 1951), his first work in this medium since the *Hymn to St. Cecilia* (1942), is a more modest composition than both the latter and the Martin which, however, could be glad if it evinced a fraction of the imagination manifest in these tonally progressive songs ($E\flat \rightarrow D$); the last, a hit-song in a sophisticated sense, may strike all but those who are afraid of their lower brows as the best. Frankel's *Three Poems* lack unifying contrast, the problem of integrating three movements of slow character remaining unsolved. One has the impression that the idea

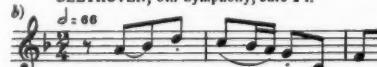
of tackling this scheme must have sprung from extra-formal considerations. Without showing any other deficiencies, the pieces do not give an idea of the composer's stature, to which one probably has to be alive in order to enjoy them.

The first Salzburg performances of Alban Berg's supreme, if unintended contribution to the re-development of opera (and to the resurrection of the Viennese school) took place 29 years after its completion and 16 years after his death. Nevertheless, the *Salzburger Volksblatt* raised its hands in ignorant horror at the thought of converting the Festspielhaus into "an experimental stage and studio"; the *Wozzeck* affair was actually and stormily discussed in the Salzburg diet [*Landtag*], where the Vice-president himself opined that there was "nothing festive about a murder" (unless, apparently, it occurred in *Otello*); and the box office receipts for all performances but the first were pitiful. But what left me speechless was not so much the public's and press resistance to the work as the particular kind of favourable attitude towards it manifested by the *Wiener Kurier* of 31st August: ". . . this year we have to appreciate, in particular, the production of *Wozzeck* which—though welcomed only by part of the public—helped towards establishing, before an international forum, the prestige due to this work, a venture which was a cultural obligation for Austria and was realized in exemplary fashion". *Wozzeck* had to establish itself all over the world without the help of Salzburg, where it ought to have been performed in the first place, and now comes this reeking self-praise which completely reverses the actual situation; for without its world prestige *Wozzeck* could have waited another thirty years for its Salzburg production which, it is true, must nevertheless be considered courageous in the circumstances obtaining in conservative Austria. Naturally, I raised hell about this whole state of affairs both in the press and over the Austrian radio, where I told the Austrians that they seemed to have got stuck at Bruckner. After he had gone through the typescript of my talk, a radio official told me that it was rather a mouthful, but that since I was British it was alright. He did not realize the wise meaning of his idiotic remark, for even our oldest foes over here acclaim *Wozzeck*, if only in order to have a stick with which to beat Schönberg. The fact remains that they have the stick, and the question arises how they got it—how *Wozzeck* achieved its international popularity and how, none too musically performed, it was stormily welcomed even in the Festspielhaus itself, though one suspected the commando troops of the Universal Edition to be present in order to extend the applause to (justifiedly) demonstrative lengths. One explanation is the strong drama, another the effects, particularly "the" *crescendo*. In addition, as Goffredo Petrassi said to me, the style of *Wozzeck* is "impure" (by which he meant, of course, not that it was impurely tonal, but that it was impurely atonal—a far- and wide-sighted statement from so prominent a pandiatonist). But for the purpose of popularity Berg's styles are hardly impure enough, whereas there is no murder in, say, the almost equally popular violin Concerto. I submit that the strongest cause of Berg's popularity is his eclecticism. Once one has felt oneself fairly thoroughly into *Wozzeck*, one realizes that there is hardly an untraditional bar, the (mostly legitimate) derivativism extending not only over the language, but also straight into the content, the musical thoughts. In other words, the atonal aspect of the work is just as eclectic as the tonal one, sometimes even more so: the tonal style of one section may be relatively untraditional, whereas the atonal ideas of another section may derive straight from Beethoven. Let us look at two cornerstones, the (*quasi-*) prologue and the epilogue. The prelude of the 1st scene (which is composed as a character-piece on the Captain in the form of a continuous suite), that is to say, has for its theme—Ex. 1a, recurring later in identical (untransposed) form at the beginning of the phantasy (act II/2) that introduces the triple fugue and, of course, as first subject of the fugue itself—a derivative from the equally opening theme of Beethoven's Sixth (Ex. 1b), as unashamed in rhythmic structure and melodic outline as it is transmuted

Ex. 1 WOZZECK, bar 4



BEETHOVEN, 6th Symphony, bars 1 f.



in matters emotional and idiomatic. At the same time, its pull to B (Beethoven's dominant has become Berg's un-dominating tonic) will be clearer here, in harmonically uncontradicted isolation, than in the opera house (the work will be produced at Covent Garden in January), where it will sound "atonal", yet "nice": a hidden manifestation of Petrassi's "impurity". There is nothing hidden, on the other hand, of the epilogue's tonality; in fact, D minor is, as it were, what the piece "is about". Its tonal language has often been called Mahlerian, but its modes of harmonic expression are in fact highly original, unmistakably Berg; that they owe certain general traits to Mahler is as inevitable and self-evident as it is uninteresting. What is less evident and far more interesting is that the theme (Ex. 2) starts out, even in mood, from the Nocturne of Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, but is prevented from running an epigonic course, and deflected

WOZZECK, epilogue
Adagio

Ex. 2

from too peaceful an emotional atmosphere, by following up the quartal implications with which its previous occurrences (*e.g.* Ex. 4a-b) have invested its upbeat, only to arrive, in a context that has meanwhile become completely Bergian, at a completely Puccinian phrase and texture (Ex. 2, bars 3/2 f.): about the last influence one would have suspected in Berg, indicative at the same time of the extreme width of his eclecticism. More frequent, and less surprising, are his references to Wagner's thematic shapes, Ex. 3a, for instance, having arrived from the *Siegfried Idyll* (Ex. 3b) via the *Verklärte Nacht* in a subordinate part of

WOZZECK, bars 657 f.
Andante affettuoso

Ex. 3

a)

b)

SIEGFRIED-IDYLL, bars 86 f.

the first act's five character-pieces, *i.e.* the one on the Tambourmajor. Perhaps most frequently, Berg draws on Schönberg. This greatly surprised me, in that when I heard *Wozzeck* years ago I was not sufficiently well acquainted with Schönberg to realize that his architectural and thematic influence on the opera was as strong as, if not indeed stronger than, his idiomatic influence. In particular, Schönberg's first chamber Symphony must have been deeply active in Berg's mind. Most obviously, there is the exact scoring of Schönberg's chamber orchestra in the separate orchestra of the *largo* that forms the slow movement of the opera's central symphony (act II). Also, like Schönberg's, this symphony is in five continuous movements (of which the above-mentioned phantasy and fugue is the second); their structural relation to the chamber Symphony I hope to show on a future occasion. In the present limited space, I am confining myself to two important thematic invasions of the chamber Symphony into *Wozzeck*. The first makes Schönberg's basic phrase (Ex. 4c) into one of the opera's principal themes, the earlier occurrence of Ex. 4a (in the character-piece on Andres) being less directly related to the Schönberg (and more directly to Ex. 2) than the later occurrence of Ex. 4b (in Marie's lullaby, which is part of her own character-piece). Incidentally, the way from Beckmesser's lute is long but straight. The second invasion conquers the B \flat minor phrase (Ex. 5a) of the berceuse itself, divests it of its siciliana character by changing round the dotted rhythm, infuses it with the character of Schönberg's first subject's first theme's (Ex. 5c's) principal motif,

Ex. 4WOZZECK, bars 248f.
poco accel.WOZZECK, bar 395
molto rit.SCHÖNBERG, 1st chamber Symphony,
bars 5f.

assigns it *the same structural position* in the symphony's (*i.e.* act II's) first (sonata) movement, and finally, in the subordinate parts of the latter's *coda* (see Ex. 5b (i)–(v)), almost

Ex. 5

WOZZECK, bars 388f.



b) WOZZECK, Act II, (i) bars 151f., (ii) 155f.,

(iii) 158, (iv) 159, (v) 160



c) SCHÖNBERG, 1st chamber Symphony, bars 6ff.



replaces it by the Schönberg motif. While an inspection (or, better still, audition) of all the relevant sections in both the chamber Symphony and *Wozzeck* is absolutely necessary for a full appreciation of the latter invasion, it will perhaps already be realized that as in the case of the quartal theme (see Ex. 4), Schönberg's influence is again as it were gradually uncovered by Berg, not being discoverable yet in Ex. 5a which, nevertheless, must have been composed in view of what was to happen to it in the course of symphonic events. With Ex. 5, this intramusical progress *cum* historical (and psychological) regress is not only observable in the very long run, but also in the short run of the symphony's *coda* where, as the successive examples 5b (i)–(v) partly show, *the development of and to the model* (as I should like to call this tendency) makes itself felt within the smallest possible musical space. The human mind is recklessly deceptive: it harbours opposite tendencies in order that one should never discover the other one. That it likes to develop away from an original model everyone knows; that it can, even at the same time, also develop towards a model I should have clearly noticed and formulated when I wrote my paper on *Mozart and Boccherini* (this journal, November, 1947), where I merely pointed out that "of the four [Mozart] movements I [was] quoting . . . , the [latest (1789) was] most strongly related to the Boccherini [theme whose emergence in various works of Mozart I tried to show and explain]". For here was a long-range manifestation of our tendency, extending over several works and many years. Indeed, come to think of it, Mendelssohn started as Mendelssohn and ended with Bach, while Stravinsky, proceeding from Stravinsky, has just landed himself in *Così fan tutte*, among too few other things and a basic allowance

of wrong notes. How far now is Berg's own eclecticism open to criticism? As far as he does not say something new; and he says something new almost all the way through. Perhaps one case in question is the symphony's scherzo movement (act II, scene 4) which, proceeding from Mahler (bars 412-429) to Richard Strauss (bar 429 ff.), almost loses Berg on the way. A *pastiche* is of course dramatically needed at this point, but not one on Mahler and Strauss. *Peter Grimes*, though in its turn drawing on *Wozzeck* in a great variety of ways, solves the parallel problem with far more originality. In Berg's case, the Ländler is nowadays beginning to sound "delightful", which it shouldn't—but that is the fate of every good *pastiche* that lacks personality. The rest of Mahler's influence—including even bars 5 ff. of Wozzeck's drinking song in act III, i.e. the phrases to "*Mein Wein ist gut, mein Bier ist klar*" . . . etc., which come as straight as creatively possible from "*Der Lenz ist da, sei kommen über Nacht*" (*Lied von der Erde*, V: "*Der Trunkene[!]* im Frühling")—is above criticism. Not so, however, all the unofficial Schönberg quotations (which are not, of course, confined to the chamber Symphony: at the end of the invention on the continuous pedal of B (act III, scene 2), for instance, Marie dies to the basic motif of Schönberg's piano pieces, Op. 11); sometimes Schönberg's influence seems too new and powerful to allow sufficient amalgamation in Berg's mind. Thus, paradoxically, the most epigonic part of *Wozzeck*'s eclecticism (Ländler apart) consists of some of its most modern sections. Where, on the other hand, Berg avails himself of Schönberg's techniques rather than themes, his inventiveness often flows most freely and individually. To give a simple instance, and in order to contradict the often-heard statement that there is nothing dodecaphonic about *Wozzeck* (which, emerging as it once did from the lips of one of our leading music critics, I believed myself until I became sufficiently acquainted with the work), I finally quote the theme of the passacaglia which, comprising 21 variations, forms the first act's fourth character-piece, i.e. the one on the Doctor:—

Ex. 8
WOZZECK, bars 488 ff.
♩ = 36-40

The musical score for Ex. 8 shows a bassoon part. The score is divided into seven bars, each starting with a bassoon note. Bar 1: 'quasi-recitative, the tempo to be taken very freely'. Bar 2: 'ever more excitedly'. Bar 3: 'marcatissimo' followed by 'far more calmly'. Bar 4: 'very tenderly' followed by 'with more and more feeling'. Bar 5: 'with more and more feeling'. Bar 6: 'with more and more feeling'. Bar 7: 'with more and more feeling'.

The seven-bar structure coincides with a strict tone-row.

The most Bergian aspect of the Salzburg production was Caspar Neher's *décor*. Oscar Fritz Schuh produced intelligently, though unfortunately not always according to the composer's stage directions; whereas Karl Böhm did not sufficiently utilize his thorough knowledge of the notes towards articulating and balancing them in their proper formal and textual context. At times, indeed, the bare notes remained unrecognizable, for Josef Herrmann's (*Wozzeck*) and particularly Christl Goltz's (*Marie*) intonation was uncertain. Yet the entire cast, which included Hans Beirer as Tambourmajor, Heinrich

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Bensing as Andres, Peter Klein as excellent Hauptmann, Carl Dönch as well-understood, though somewhat exaggerated Doctor, and Polly Batic as Margret, must be congratulated upon contributing to performances that were better than none—a rarity among interpretations of advanced music. At the same time, from what I know about the cast of, and the preparations for the forthcoming Covent Garden production (under Kleiber, who conducted the *première* of the work), I think it quite likely that London's *Wozzeck*, though in English, will be musically better than Salzburg's.

H. K.

Film Music and Beyond

FROM AUDEN TO HOLLYWOOD
(THROUGH ROUTE)

IN an imaginative but, strictly speaking, unmusical and illogical article, Auden says:—

Because music expresses the opposite experience of pure volition and subjectivity (the fact that we cannot shut our ears at will allows music to assert that we cannot not choose), film music is not music but a technique for preventing us using our ears to hear extraneous noises and it is bad film music if we become consciously aware of its existence.

To Auden, music is about Choice; "a succession of two musical notes is an act of choice". *Non sequitur*, the reader may say, but the inference (from the latter to the former proposition) is Auden's. And where, anyway, did he get his curious premise? Possibly from or through Stravinsky, if one may judge from both *The Rake's Progress* and from what, very aptly as far as this music is concerned, he recently pronounced in Venice: "I don't create. I just sniff about and discover musical truffles". Shall we say, then, that for the *com*-*poser* music is about sniffing, while for the creator it is about must-ing? (Stravinsky is capable of being either.) In and behind the face of love and creation, "must" changes from an auxiliary into a full verb. As Eva sings to Sachs (act III):

"Doch nun hat's mich gewählt
Zu nie gekannter Qual;
Und werd' ich heut' vermählt,
So war's ohn' alle Wahl:
Das war ein Müslen, war ein Zwang!
Euch selbst, mein Meister, wurde bang."

But then Wagner, poor old romantic, never knew the delights of serene sniffing.

Allowing for either a literal or any possible transferred meaning of Auden's paragraph on film music, one takes his proposition to imply either that music is composed in psychological view, conscious or unconscious, of the fact that the listener cannot shut his ears, or that he would perceive music as something different from what it is if he could. Either implication presupposes that from the musical point of view there is an essential difference between the imagined possibility of shutting one's ears and the real necessity of switching off the wireless or escaping into the bar or (if one is capable of it) thinking of something else. Since a reason for this presupposition is not readily imaginable, Auden might have bothered to give us his.

The proposition that film music is a technique for preventing us from hearing noises—again emerging as a *non sequitur* with a wrong premise on top of it—shows Auden's desperate attempt to call film music something, anything, except music and names, but does not contain any truth worth knowing (though it did in the days of the silent film) or any untruth worth controverting.

The equally confident assertion, on the other hand, that "it is bad film music if we become consciously aware of its existence" has to be fought to its death. Who is we? *Pluralis majestatis*, I hope, for I wish to be excluded. I pointed out four years ago that "'unobtrusive' was the magic word painted on every film specialist's wall, though to the

musician its meaning must remain vague". To me it has no meaning at all: I am incapable of hearing music without listening to it, except when it is far away and I am talking. I never heard any film music of whose existence I did not become consciously aware.

I remember once having lunch with Buxbaum, the late cellist of the Rosé Quartet and principal cellist of the Vienna Philharmonic, and with another, at the Regent's Palace Hotel. The band started to play and our unnamed companion continued to talk. Buxbaum, though very interested, waved him aside: "I can't take in what you say while they're playing". They were playing something unobtrusive. Notwithstanding his philosophy on open ears, Auden can shut his while we can't shut ours.

The problem he poses is of the first aesthetic and even moral magnitude. I said in the last issue that the anti-artistic influence of Hollywood's music was the most tenacious musical enemy of culture in the history of our civilization. Much of the enemy's success is due to his hitting the majority of film-goers—even musical ones, even composers—below the belt of consciousness where, according to Auden, film music ought to hit. I thought I had exploded this idea in my above-quoted effort, but see now that I have to repeat myself:—

The first beneficial effect . . . of the film music critic's work will be to stimulate audiences' interests in sometimes becoming spontaneously and voluntarily conscious of significant parts of musical perceptions that would otherwise wholly float about in the twilight of the preconscious. Let no one tell us that film music depends for its artistic effect on its not emerging into the conscious. Any so-called artistic process or device that has to shun the light of consciousness is suspect in the extreme. Artistic processes have to satisfy the mind on all its levels, the unconscious, the preconscious and the conscious ones, and in each of its aspects, i.e. its oractic as well as its cognitive ways. Thrust, in parts, from the unselective preconscious into open consciousness, into an aural close-up, film music will be heard for what it isn't worth.

Born to be Bad is an RKO picture. RKO never mentions its composers on its programmes for the press; it must know why. In this instance, however, the music is by Frederick Hollander. Not that you can recognize him in *Born to be Bad*: he was born to be good but nowadays composes Hollywood music instead. The title gives the sort of bad film music of which Auden would become consciously aware. The first intra-filmic entry gives the same sort of bad film music of which, however, Auden would not become consciously aware, because this unnecessary saccharine waltz proceeds behind the dialogue and is in fact partly indistinguishable. As everyone will forehear who knows something about the structural functions of Hollywood music, the waltz is there because it leads up to a kiss. Thence it runs into something which has been lifted, complete with instrumentation, from Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. The educated listener will again immediately recognize this as an impending motto, first because by Hollywood standards memorability depends on your having heard the tune before you hear it for the first time, and secondly because it occurs at the change from the first to the second sequence of the film, and Hollywood's mottos always stick sequences together.

The second entry gives a historical survey from Wagner to Hollywood and leads up to the second kiss.

The third entry attaches the Gershwin to the same shot of New York as the first entry, using it again as putty.

The fourth entry leads down from the third kiss.

The fifth entry leads up to the fourth kiss. Afterwards, Hollander's individuality emerges for a moment in an intelligent, threatening treatment of the always-quoted Wedding March of Mendelssohn.

The sixth entry gives the only other indication of Hollander's imagination, a tense emotional atmosphere being foreshadowed by lyrical means.

The last kiss, unaccompanied, represents the only point in the film where an emotional culmination is not underlined by a musical tautology.

The tenth entry follows with the initial waltz and the Gershwin motto, and ends the film in the home key of E flat. I am pretty sure that the only bit which Auden would have spontaneously noticed, i.e. the menacing variation on the Mendelssohn, would have been the only bit he would have approved of if he had made himself listen to the entire score.

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Where indeed are the times when he wrote obtrusive, *quasi-musical* film poetry (for the G.P.O. Film Unit pieces *Coal Face* and *Night Mail* of 1936, for both of which he collaborated with Benjamin Britten)? Grierson described *Night Mail* to Roger Manvell as a kick in the belly: the belt of consciousness had been lowered for the purpose. But then, at that time Stravinsky *created his music*, too.

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H. K.

The Cheltenham Festival

BY

PAUL HAMBURGER

FIRST PERFORMANCES. [An asterisk denotes recent works which had their first performance elsewhere.]

William Alwyn, *Festival March*. Concerto Grosso for strings, No. 2.* Handel-Barbirolli, Concerto in B \flat for clarinet and strings. Arnold van Wyk, first Symphony. Maurice Jacobson, *Symphonic Suite* for strings. Benjamin Frankel, string Trio, Op. 3.* John Gardner, first Symphony. Malcolm Arnold, first Symphony. Philip Sainton, *Serenade Fantastique* for oboe and strings. Humphrey Searle, *Poem* for twenty-two strings. Bernard Stevens, *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra. Alan Rawsthorne, piano Concerto No. 2.*

The programme-note praises Mr. Alwyn for being "master of his musical medium without a trace of academicism or modernistic theorizing" (my italics). If only he harboured a drop of the latter poison, we could more easily suffer to be drowned in an ocean of the former. For if this March is not academic, I do not know what is. Its one and only good idea, a start on the dominant, is followed by a C major of the most cinematographic self-complacency, by modulations and transparent formal designs that blandly assure the listener that he need not fear losing his way, and by a *coda* that piles up the added sixths to the roof of the Leicester Square Odeon. Much less blatant is Alwyn's Concerto Grosso where the string writing and the solo-tutti contrast are treated with some nicety but whose harmony falls between the stools of an admitted Handel-pastiche (at the outer ends of movements) and a not-so-admitted *pastiche* of several modern composers (in the developments). Again, the programme-note (John F. Russell) reassures the purist that Barbirolli's unorthodox use of the clarinet in Handel is justified by the fact that "Handel himself had no scruples about doing this [altering the fundamental tone-colour] in other directions". Which directions? Handel might not have objected to the transcription of various tunes for a concerto, but he would certainly have objected to the clarinet, because, had he known it, he would have written differently for it. Trimming away a few low passages, Barbirolli could have made this quite a good oboe concerto.

The South African Arnold van Wyk's (born 1916) awareness that this is a First Symphony, and no nonsense about it, has the agreeable consequence of making him look for a large structure, but unfortunately communicates itself to the listener. The thematic material of the Symphony seems to me quite uncomplicated, and ideally sufficient for a concert overture. It is basically of demonic scherzo character (the scherzo is the most successful movement), and the honest attempt to erect a symphony on it fails, not through its uneconomical use, but through a lack of perspicacity as to the material's

basic requirements; or, *vice versa*, as to the requirements (more spiritual than technical) that a symphony makes of its themes. Equally, the formal one-movement plan of five exposition themes (more or less in sonata-form: the third theme tends towards dominant and enhanced dominant), followed by a development, followed by a scherzo (on those themes), followed by a free recapitulation of themes 2-5, followed by a slow, *coda*-like recapitulation of theme 1—this plan is tempting, but, in view of its difficulty, premature for a first symphony. As it is, the form creaks—and is either left to creak, or hastily oiled in exactly those places where its parts should join like the limbs of an organism. Among van Wyk's "lubrications" are the joining of the first section to the scherzo, and most important, because most climactic, the joining of the scherzo to the sonata-recapitulation where the form breaks down under an overload of orchestration imposed on a pittance of counterpoint. Van Wyk's orchestration is brilliant, and his energetic bass and cello parts somehow symbolize the hard-working ambition of the entire work.

"Ambitious" and "hard-worked" are also the terms for the Jacobson's texture and polyphony. Yet, with some exceptions, they get there, on the generally lower level of the "suite". The exceptions are little whirlpools of excessive linear commotion, admittedly less harmful here than they would be in a symphony (and definitely enjoyable in the bustling last movement) but impeding, for instance, the direct appeal of the otherwise deeply conceived slow movement. The first movement is the most straightforward, with a vivacious, and often syncopated, perfect fourth keeping the wheels turning. Its many successful modulations and phraseological niceties are even intensified in the finale, whose original formal scheme of making a set of variations (derived from A) the middle-part of a ternary A-B-A, almost comes off. In spite of its relative failure to carry the unity of the movement over two indefinite variation *cadas* into a (quasi)-cyclic recapitulation and *coda*, this plan was definitely worth trying. A special word of admiration is due to Jacobson's very cogently curtailed recapitulations (*cf.* first and last movements) which rush headlong into a brilliant *coda*.

Barbirolli's performance of Vaughan Williams' Fourth must be mentioned with Raymond Cohen's Elgar violin Concerto, and the Robert Masters Piano Quartet's rendering of Brahms' Op. 25 as the most musical performances of the festival. The Robert Masters also played William Wordsworth's piano Quartet, Op. 36 (1948) and Benjamin Frankel's string Trio, Op. 3. It is amazing how Frankel's wistful charm and the plasticity of his idiom are already fully developed in this comparatively early work. The other two first symphonic essays by young composers performed by the Hallé could not have been more different in intent and realization. John Gardner's turgid and ill-humoured effusion, euphemistically called a symphony, and aspiring to this lofty status in a terse analytical programme-note that could have been the blue-print for something real, reminds one, in its blind imitation of modern English masters, of the torrent of undigested Wagner that swept Germany round 1900. Indeed, one would call this cribbing from Vaughan Williams, Bax, Delius, Sibelius (and even Chabrier, of all people, in the unsurpassably puerile scherzo) shameless, were it not to be presumed unconscious. Malcolm Arnold, on the other hand, hates beating about the bush and lays himself open to inspection by all and sundry, which is, of course, taken by all and sundry to mean that he puts himself at their mercy. Critics, especially, are not slow to withhold their unasked-for sympathies and act on the assumption that the suspect who talks freely will surely have a skeleton or two in his cupboard. But Arnold's style is not fashioned to disarm by frankness, it is just—frank. He could easily have clustered up the themes and development sections of his first movement with conventional bridge-passages; he could have embedded the "folk-tune" of his second movement in luscious counterpoint, instead of showing, as he does, its "seamy side" in the course of the movement; he could have smoothed off the edges of the last movement's intensely rhythmical polyphony into a semblage of easy-going connectedness; for the crowning intra-musical irony of the Italian ditty that evolves from the last movement's fugue, eerily harmonized to show up the insufficiency of all "harmonizations", he could have substituted the pleasant, programmatic joke of a "sufficient", *i.e.* condescending, harmonization. He does nothing of the

sort, but gives free rein to his enormous musical sense: a purely musical logic for once that has not been sidetracked by novelistic, ballet, or moralist aspirations.

The Sainton not only sounds extremely well (the oboe part must be a joy to play) but is worked with great craftsmanship, especially in the opening scherzo. Unfortunately, the composer's ideas are of little consequence, and even his craftsmanship does not see beyond its own nose: there is too great a drop in tonal tension to the central sham-lyrical *Adagio*, and the following *poco giocoso* of the oboe overworks its apt little motive into an unending string of trite *rosalias*. The Searle, played at the same concert by the Boyd Neel Orchestra, is a very conscientious 12-tone composition; it seems, after one hearing, that it is also very good music. Stated vertically in six 12-part chords, the row is then developed horizontally to a climax of intense polyphonic concentration, and led back again to the vertical writing of the end. It is in the second part's gradual renunciation of extreme polyphonic order for the uncharted lands of dodecaphonous harmony that Searle has shown himself a master.

The Stevens (commissioned in 1948 by the B.B.C.) is a solid, yet nowhere overwritten piece of great invention in its first movement (some strong, typically Stevens, bass lines in that) and great formal, though not so inventive craftsmanship in the fugal last movement with its complete inversion of the initial fugue. Altogether, it is a great step forward towards the perfect blend of imagination and skill to which Stevens seems to aspire more conscientiously than other composers. The Rawsthorne is an important event: a really good modern piano Concerto; that is, a work which is neither musically the worse for being virtuoso, nor less virtuoso for being symphonic. To be sure, it is a symphonic concerto in that Rawsthorne seriously alloys the piano to the orchestra, but ironizes their occasional opposition; yet it is not a symphony with piano. In fact, there is hardly another work that demonstrates so definitively the difference between the accidental and the essential use of the adjective "symphonic". For the virtuoso element has achieved here what it promised in Rawsthorne's first Concerto: it has penetrated the form, and from this invulnerable position makes sure that the work does not become "symphonic" in the essential sense. Examples: the first movement, between a short, near-monothematic exposition and recapitulation, exhibits one of the most varied developments of modern music. In the scherzo and final rondo (the work is in four movements), cyclic variation form—the epitome of deliberate playfulness in the way it disguises and reveals identity—celebrates triumphs of deft knowledgé and allusive wit. The last movement's shifts of tonality between the Concerto's basic F sharp major and its Neapolitan sixth (G) are something that would be unthinkable in a symphony, but equally so in the Tchaikovsky *cum* Grieg *cum* Rachmaninov type of concerto. In sum, a great master has here brought about that perfect fusion of what Einstein calls the *galant* and the learned element which is the indispensable basis of good *concertante* music, in our day as much as in Mozart's.

Glyndebourne

BY

GEOFFREY SHARP

Le Nozze di Figaro: 12th July

Don Giovanni: 13th July

Idomeneo: 14th July

THE finale of the second act of *Figaro* is generally accepted as the high spot of the opera and often described as one of Mozart's greatest achievements. Admittedly its imaginative and technical brilliance remains unsurpassed; but it is possible that established custom has encouraged a wrong approach to the work and paved the way for a critical attitude not justified by the score.

Figaro can be played in many ways, from the nondescript, faintly silly delineation of period farce which we see so often in this country, to the near-socialist tract delivered with such invigorating effect under Karajan's direction in Salzburg in 1948. Yet neither of these extremes, nor any compromise between them really approaches what Mozart evidently intended. But it was left to Fritz Busch and Carl Ebert to make that evidence plain.

In other words, cast a lady and gentleman with fine voices, stage presence and an understanding of the work as the Count and Countess Almaviva and much else will take care of itself. This is an oversimplification, but will serve to indicate the proper perspective from which alone the full grandeur of the drama may be appreciated.

Alfred Poell and Lisa della Casa, in this production, towered over their colleagues to such an extent that the centre of gravity of the opera shifted inevitably from the second to the third act: and who will deny the consequent improvement in overall balance? Sena Jurinac, substituting for Dorothy MacNeil, gave her usual pert study of Cherubino, but the rest of the cast were undistinguished, with Alois Pernerstorfer an unperceptive, almost clodhopping Figaro and Murray Dickie's Basilio appropriating the musical mantle but not quite the dramatic characterization of Heddle Nash. Fritz Busch illuminated the score with his customary clarity and characteristic ruthless extermination of all tendencies to wander from strict *tempo*. Budding conductors in the audience could have learned a fundamental lesson: that *rubato* has to be paid back.

The great merits of Mario Petri's *Don Giovanni* were that he seemed one who might be taken unawares within the confines of the drama itself—and how often one sees in the part so-called actors who are never surprised at anything—and, equally important, he revelled in the many technical difficulties of this title rôle. It is surely a mistake to set too much store by the Don's past record with its implication of, at the least, advancing years. Petri's full-blooded, uninhibited portrayal encompassed all the essentials and, by its youthful exuberance, was able to assimilate one or two cruder facets such as one would forgive a young product of Eton and Oxford. Mr. Meyerstein has put a case for a young protagonist (MR, IV, 2: p. 126): this performance justified in practice his theoretical point of view. Certainly the fundamentals were right: Pernerstorfer made a credible and lively Leporello, Dargavel a competent Commendatore who, with a little more voice, would have been outstanding, and Danco and Simoneau made the music for Elvira and Ottavio appear far less difficult than many modern singers. The Anna, Zerlina and Masetto were less impressive, but the hard core of the narrative suffered comparatively little.

That Piper's sets too often gave the impression of "flats" smeared with too exotic fruit salad, and that the scenery was of a flimsiness not formerly characteristic of Glyndebourne ultimately detracted little from the sustained dramatic strength and epic grandeur which Fritz Busch has long been able to distil from this magnificent score. For its unremitting integrity and resultant revelation of dramatic truth this *Don Giovanni* must take a place among the finest for many years.

Although there were three amateur productions of *Idomeneo* in the late thirties, this powerful *opera seria* has had to wait until 1951 for its first fully professional representation in this country: a fine performance which, despite, or some will say on account of extensive cuts, provided practical proof of what we already knew: that the score's many technical difficulties must not be allowed to obscure *Idomeneo*'s right to be considered a masterpiece. Glyndebourne achieved a notable success with unfamiliar and in part intractable material comparable with its astonishing resurrection of Verdi's *Macbeth* before the war.

Opera will reveal its full secret only when an imaginative, intelligent, determined and painstaking approach is made; or, more simply, it rewards its interpreters strictly according to their deserts. In this case Fritz Busch, Carl Ebert, Oliver Messel and an almost ideal cast had combined to prove perhaps to themselves and certainly to us that *Idomeneo* was not merely a mine of superb music but could also be presented for the most part as

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good theatre. As the king Richard Lewis gave by far the finest performance we have yet seen from him. His voice is now larger and more flexible than last year, while his dramatic ability and stage technique have improved literally beyond recognition; all that was lacking was a proper mastery of the Italian language. Sena Jurinac (*Ilia*) lends distinction to every rôle she sings, but can have done nothing better than the recitative and *aria* with which the work opens. Léopold Simoneau and Birgit Nilsson dealt capably with the less rewarding parts of *Idamante* and *Elektra*, but the part of Arbace had been cut so severely that very little remained for Alfred Poell to do.

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The recent sudden death of Fritz Busch breaks a partnership which was unique in its objective and remarkable for its great success. Busch had many other and larger calls on his time and energies, but nowhere will he be more sincerely and seriously missed than at Glyndebourne.

The Liverpool Festival

BY

HENRY RAYNOR

It is natural hopefully to imagine that the great experiences of a three-weeks' festival will be the performances of new works, but events rarely match expectations. What stand out in the mind from the Liverpool Festival are the *Spring Symphony* and *Albert Herring*—works new only to Liverpool—and Flagstad's last *Isolde*.

The programmes originally included performances of Schönberg's second chamber Symphony and works by Riegger and Ruggles unknown here, subsequently changed by Stokowski to old favourites. As it was impossible to take either of this conductor's concerts seriously without danger of apoplexy, our loss was not, perhaps, great. Performances on the whole were of a high standard: *Tristan* and *Der Rosenkavalier* showed Covent Garden in a better light than any of their recent visits; Stokowski's eccentricities could not hide the quality of the Royal Philharmonic, through it is regrettable that Beecham's preoccupation with *The Bohemian Girl* prevented him from exercising the orchestra in a work of festival dimensions. If the rest of the playing failed to reach this standard, the Hallé's virility and the soundness of the London Philharmonic are well-known, whilst the local orchestra, bearing the brunt of the novelties, was at its most alert.

On the grounds of all-round musicianly team-work, the English Opera Group provided perhaps the best fare. It is unnecessary to say more of *Herring* than to remind the super-subtle that good comedy usually means something serious. The case of Easedale's *The Sleeping Children* is more complex, and some corrective to earlier criticisms may be of value. The opera composer can only learn his trade by writing operas that may prove unsatisfactory, and hampered by a *libretto* that sways between outmoded expressionism and plain factuality, Easedale has failed to realize any extended dramatic form, so that his music becomes, in the theatrical sense, incidental. A good opera needs a consistent *libretto*, though we know that more than one composer has transcended the text on which he has worked. That Easedale has failed to do this does not excuse the lamentable failure of many of the critics to consider anything but Guthrie's book.

The major orchestral novelty was Fricker's second Symphony. The work's main preoccupation is formal, the composer's note suggesting that it shows a parallel between rondo and sonata-forms. Of the three movements—there is no scherzo—the first and third are rondos, the first "expanding", the second loosely constructed, whilst the intervening *Lento* is in sonata-form with new material in the development section, which returns to act as *coda*, and rounded off by a return of the opening theme, a lovely moment for horn solo through a texture of divided strings. This work marks an advance on its

predecessor, being coolly designed and avoiding the over-intense urgency of the first Symphony. Fricker's harmonies are far from conservative, but they are integral to the work, so that we cannot speak of them as "daring". Sparsely scored, it reaches a logical and exciting climax; its rhythmic vitality and the floriation of decorative figures into melody are more than interesting, but the final impression is one of almost unrelieved heaviness, for in spite of moments of beauty and excitement that rise out of close, coherent thought, the work is self-consciously, almost didactically serious. It lacks, somehow, essential humanity.

Apart from the works by Pitfield noticed elsewhere, the orchestral novelties were overtures by Maurice Johnstone—*Banners*, a ceremonial work, skilfully unoriginal and rather too concerned with a choral use of the brass in the manner of Vaughan Williams—and Kenneth Leighton—*Primavera Romana*, a bright, lively piece: but rhythmically varied themes can grow tiresome if they are not easily distinguishable from each other melodically; a minute longer and the work would have been tedious. The Fricker and Maurice Johnstone were played by the Liverpool Philharmonic under Rignold; the same team was responsible for the first concert performance of Frankel's violin Concerto, which verified our original estimate of its unusual quality. *Primavera Romana* owed its emergence to Stokowski and the Royal Philharmonic.

The Boyd Neel Orchestra introduced a *Divertimento* by Arthur Oldham which pays gay and enjoyable homage to Mozart: the classic discipline is accepted gratefully, and whilst the music is totally unpretentious, it is both accomplished and witty and has considerable feeling. Their second concert included a *Concertino* for piano and strings by Douglas Miller, an ingratiating survival from the days of Rachmaninov, but overshadowed by Hamerik's splendid but little-known Symphony *Spirituelle*.

Amongst twentieth-century English composers Rawsthorne's *Symphonic Studies*, Berkeley's *Divertimento*, *Belshazzar's Feast* and *Façade* gave a cheering indication of the variety and accomplishment we have in this country. Twenty years ago the danger was that English music would dig its rut in the shadow of the Sibelian eminence, a danger which it is now clear has been averted.

Salzburg

BY

GEOFFREY SHARP

1st–8th August

As in the case of its younger imitator (*cf. Hohen Edinburg!*), the emphasis in Salzburg too is passing from music to commerce. There is now too little music and the standard varies between too wide limits, while such monstrosities as this emasculated *Idomeneo* could barely pass muster at an East Anglian village Festival. There were good things as well, but it was clear that Salzburg now concentrates more upon the profits to be made out of the (principally American) tourist than upon providing a widely varied selection of performances, each of the highest possible calibre.

Apart from this travesty of *Idomeneo*, which was mercilessly cut, telescoped into one act and presented in the Felsenreitschule in the form of a pageant, there were, during the week under review, a mere three other works of true festival stamp: a very fine performance of Respighi's *Il Tramonto* given by Irmgard Seefried and the Schneiderhan Quartet and barely adequate readings under Messner's direction of *The Mount of Olives* and Bruckner's 150th Psalm. In the case of such rarities, one is grateful for any kind of performance, however bad; though the lack of any attempt to balance choral and orchestral forces was, to say the least, exasperating.

Quite the finest instrumental performance came from Friedrich Gulda, who combines technical mastery of the highest order with a mature musical intelligence barely credible

in one so young. The opinion that age will almost certainly modify the pace with which he attacked Bach's C minor *Toccata*, and also remove the slightly strident, semi-hysterical edge from his more violent outbursts in Beethoven's Op. 111, is offered more in the spirit of prophecy than as criticism; for what is the correct speed for this *Toccata* and may not he who denies near-hysteria in Beethoven's last Sonata be branded as lacking in imagination? Certainly Gulda, who is little known in England, already combines something of the intellectual and physical power of Busoni, the technique of Petri at his best and the sensibility and imagination of Lipatti. His Bach was a model of limpid continuity and it was emphatically *his* in the sense that the great *virtuosi* of the past made their music individual without being wayward. His Beethoven was a remarkable combination of *finesse* and controlled venom: the texture of this music, which can appear so disjointed, gains almost beyond recognition when rivetted white hot.

The dead acoustics and slow reverberation of the Felsenreitschule took the edge off what might have been an uncommonly good *Zauberflöte* under Furtwängler, and seldom allowed us to forget the extreme discomfort of the seats. [This Riding School is not a suitable building for the public performance of opera or any other kind of music; perhaps the organizers of next year's Festival will give it a well earned rest and make fuller use of the Festspielhaus and Landestheater.] Seefried (Pamina) and Schöffler (Sprecher) took the vocal honours in a cast which was rather uneven.

Whatever may be and has been said in disparagement of this year's Festival, full recognition and every congratulation must be offered to Furtwängler, Herbert Graf and all concerned in the staging, rehearsals and general production of Verdi's *Otello*. To your reviewer, who never ceases to stress the importance of musico-dramatic fusion in all productions of opera, this particular experience was almost sheer delight. Ramon Vinay was the only disappointment, as he had been in the same part in London last year; he lacks the voice to put across his opening "Esultate", with the result that he fails to establish the character from the start, and his subsequent handling of the part, with its entire lack of any kind of subtlety, made one wonder how much he really understood of the rôle he had elected to interpret. It is right, of course, that Iago should present the stronger figure, but the contrast between Vinay and Schöffler was fantastic. Almost consistently fine singing together with sensitive and subtle acting of the highest class put his Iago into that small group of operatic performances which will never be forgotten by those who saw them. Dragica Martinis, after understandable initial unsteadiness, gave a truly musical account of Desdemona and there was no other weakness in the cast. The solid, impressive scenery, perfectly lit: the magnificent handling of the crowds on the stage and, above all, Furtwängler's fiery, seemingly impulsive, yet perfectly controlled mastery of the score produced in sum a rare and satisfying experience and one which, apart from Vinay, was completely convincing.

BRUCKNER V UNDER FURTWÄNGLER

BY

HANS KELLER

AFTER the Editor had left for Bayreuth, Furtwängler conducted the Vienna Philharmonic in a grandiose build-up of what, in its original version, turns out to be a wellnigh spotless symphonic structure and texture of the very highest order, with a last movement which Furtwängler called quite rightly "the most monumental finale of world literature". In the misarranged version in which it has so far been known, the movement consists of a big introduction and triple fugue, while now the ternary builds of the exposition as well as of its recapitulation emerge in their full formal splendour. Of the four movements, it is in fact the finale which had lost most (122 bars, to be exact) at the hands of its derangers, just as of Bruckner's symphonies it is the present one which, together with the Ninth,

had to endure the most savage "modifications" and "revisions" altogether; as far as the instrumentation of the Fifth is concerned, it appears now that there was *hardly a single bar* that had not been Wagnerized. The only noticeable divergence from the original version which Furtwängler allowed himself was his musically necessary doubling of the wind chorus in the final climaxes of the finale's chorale apotheosis. The only flaw which the entire structure still exhibits, and about which, alas, nothing can be done, is the bridge to the resumption of the first violins' sustained melody over the first movement's second subject (bars 131 ff.). But let the extremely painful effect which this sudden interruption in the flow of inspiration produces be a proof of the high level of inspiration upon which the rest of the work unfolds! For in a mediocre composition, the passage would make an excellent transition.

Bayreuth

BY
GEOFFREY SHARP

Parsifal, 10th August; *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, 11th, 12th, 13th and 15th August;
Die Meistersinger, 16th August

Gott! Welch Dunkel hier!

APART from *Meistersinger*, the first scene of act III of *Parsifal* and the first act of *Siegfried*, Wieland Wagner ordained that this year's pilgrims to Bayreuth should strain their eyes for hours on end, peering into, and if possible through a more or less consistently murky gloom. This, of course, simplifies matters for the producer who can leave almost everything, including all the awkward magic, such as the toad, to our imagination. What in fact we received was a sustained impression of magnificent singing and playing, seeping out across the auditorium through an all-embracing fog of slightly varying density. At times we could see so little that for all practical purposes the stage could have been dispensed with: a *reductio ad absurdum* which, surely, brands such treatment as ridiculous.

The orchestra, consisting of more than forty violins and other instruments in proportion, achieved consistently high standard which we in England have seldom encountered and now never experience; indeed, their only serious lapse occurred in the final scene of *Parsifal* where Knappertsbusch appeared to lose all sense of time and spun the texture out well beyond its normal length. As a result the spell was broken and the scene failed to make the effect it should; an error of direction rather than execution. The remaining five performances, all directed by Karajan, exhibited the diametrically opposite approach: a most welcome and enlivening urge to push the music onwards; progressive, while keeping the narrative fluid and mobile. This was the greatest achievement we have yet heard from this conductor, a series of performances he has every right to remember with pride and satisfaction: a full and complete vindication of the great hopes established by his interpretations of *Orfeo* and *Figaro* in Salzburg three years ago.

We who are used to performances of opera with one competent singer, or one blue in the boat as *The Times* has it, and a "supporting" cast of has-beens, never-wasers and never-will-bes, were especially impressed with the fact that here, in Bayreuth, all the singers could sing and were thoroughly capable of dealing with their music. As actors they were less consistently distinguished—though their shortcomings were to some extent camouflaged by the prevailing gloom—and, in particular, Sigurd Björling failed to make of Wotan the impressive figure that Hotter and Schöffler have done in recent years: as the Wanderer, in *Siegfried*, he was more convincing, but somehow never fully lived up to Waltraute's subsequent account of his brooding dejectedly over his broken spear—we were left to imagine how far the once mighty had fallen and the extent of his ruin was no more than hinted at.

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Wieland Wagner's conception of *Parsifal* centred around a curious circular "biscuit" some thirty feet in diameter planted in the middle of the stage and raised a few inches above the general level. This was put to ingenious use in the second scene of act I, which may even have given rise to the producer's basic idea; but only financial economy can be adduced in justification of this one scene being allowed, literally, to set the stage for the whole drama. Not that the scenery remained unchanged, but the changes amounted to no more than variations upon an established ground. Ludwig Weber (Gurnemanz), Martha Mödl (Kundry) and Hermann Uhde (Klingsor) distinguished themselves among an excellent cast whose weakest feature was the Parsifal of Wolfgang Windgassen.

The *Ring* was spread over five nights with a long interval before *Götterdämmerung*: the ideal procedure which we may hope Covent Garden will emulate.

The cast was as follows:—

Das Rheingold

Wotan	...	Sigurd Björling
Donner	...	Werner Faulhaber
Froh	...	Robert Bernauer
Loge	...	Walter Fritz
Alberich	...	Heinrich Pflanzl
Mime	...	Paul Kuen
Fasolt	...	Ludwig Weber
Fafner	...	Friedrich Dalberg
Fricka	...	Ira Malaniuk
Freia	...	Paula Brivkalne
Erda	...	Ruth Siewert
Woglinde	...	Elisabeth Schwarzkopf
Wellgunde	...	Lore Wissmann
Flosshilde	...	Hertha Töpper

Die Walküre

Siegmund	...	Günther Treptow
Hunding	...	Arnold van Mill
Wotan	...	Sigurd Björling
Sieglinde	...	Leonie Rysanek
Brünnhilde	...	Astrid Varnay
Fricka	...	Hanna Ludwig
Gerhilde	...	Brünnhild Friedland
Ortlinde	...	Eleanor Lausch
Waltraute	...	Elfriede Wild
Schwertleite	...	Ruth Siewert
Helmwige	...	Liselotte Thomamüller
Siegrune	...	Hertha Töpper
Grimgerde	...	Ira Malaniuk
Rossweisse	...	Hanna Ludwig

Siegfried

Siegfried	...	Bernd Aldenhoff
Mime	...	Paul Kuen
Wanderer	...	Sigurd Björling
Alberich	...	Heinrich Pflanzl
Fafner	...	Friedrich Dalberg
Erda	...	Ruth Siewert
Brünnhilde	...	Astrid Varnay
Waldvogel	...	Wilma Lipp

Götterdämmerung

Siegfried	...	Bernd Aldenhoff
Gunther	...	Hermann Uhde
Hagen	...	Ludwig Weber
Alberich	...	Heinrich Pflanzl
Brünnhilde	...	Astrid Varnay
Guntrune	...	Martha Mödl
Waltraute	...	Ruth Siewert
Erste Norn	...	Ruth Siewert
Zweite Norn	...	Ira Malaniuk
Dritte Norn	...	Martha Mödl
Woglinde	...	Elisabeth Schwarzkopf
Wellgunde	...	Hanna Ludwig
Flosshilde	...	Hertha Töpper

[NOTE:—Elisabeth Höngen was unable to sing the parts of Fricka and Waltraute owing to illness.]

There were a number of outstanding individual performances given by singers who could act and who fully understood what they were trying to do: notably Fasolt, Mime, Loge, Hunding, Sieglinde, Siegfried, Gunther, Hagen and Guntrune. Weber made a pathetic figure of Fasolt and also portrayed Hagen as the embodiment of evil, while Kuen's brilliant study of Mime combined first-rate singing and acting with a number of acrobatic feats which seemed miraculously to have no adverse effect on his breath control. The Loge of Walter Fritz was something entirely new; Wieland Wagner, who contributed an article on this subject to the analytical programme of *Rheingold*, would have nothing to do with the traditional red flickering pantomime devil which, admittedly, always seemed to border on the ridiculous, but chose to treat Loge as a kind of super-cynical progenitor of the successful London stockbroker. A model of detachment from the tribulations of Wotan and the rest, this Loge soon established himself as a strangely likeable character of a strength fully up to high grade fire-raising if only the stage technicians had played their part as well. Gunther and Guntrune, who so often appear to be dragged into *Götterdämmerung* solely to provide Wagner with a cumbersome means of tying up the

loose ends of his tetralogy, here had the inestimable benefit of the vocal skill and imaginative artistry of Hermann Uhde and Martha Mödl.

This was a magnificent musical experience which, considered as a whole, could not readily be substantially improved. But the staging and production, with the partial exception of the first act of *Siegfried*, were of an amateurish ineptitude which almost beggars description. Granted that the drama is all in the music; this is at once the most comprehensive subtlety and the crowning glory of the tetralogy—yet to use this remarkable fact as an excuse (the only possible one) for shirking all the technical difficulties of production is either to credit the audience with a greater collective imagination than it could ever possess or to show oneself incompetent in the art and craft of stage direction and management. Despite Mr. Ernest Newman's delight in the free play given to his imagination here in Bayreuth—and which of us dare claim his knowledge of the work?—the latter alternative must be considered, and there were sufficient errors to enhance its probability; errors in the form of unwanted shadows, careless following, a childish rainbow in *Rheingold*, a so-called fire in *Walküre* which would have done little credit to the local pantomime in the moot hall and other miscalculations which are better passed over in silence. Finally, and worst of all, the *débâcle* at the end of *Götterdämmerung*: there is more to it than merely lowering the lights and flapping a bit of canvas. There must be specialists in stage effects who could devise and build a first-rate *verismo* set capable of a spectacular representation of the final catastrophe.

Judging by the appearance and general condition of the auditorium, which is very shabby and old-fashioned with exceptionally uncomfortable seats, it is possible that the stage equipment is equally outdated and that the appropriate "magic" cannot be contrived with the devices that are to hand. If this is so the remedy is obvious. It also seems worth while to suggest a structural improvement which could be carried out before the auditorium is redecorated: the removal from each side of the building of three or even four of the pillars which carry no superstructure and to some extent impede the free entry and exit of the audience; indeed their only possible use can be to break up the sound reflection from the side walls and our proposed modification would still leave sufficient for this purpose.

At the risk of arousing expert disagreement, two features of this opera house must be criticized for their adverse effect upon the brightness and life of the music: the excessive reverberation time of the building and the practice of covering the orchestra pit. It is a great advantage not to be distracted by the lights of the orchestra or the gestures of the conductor, while the singers also have less difficulty in penetrating the orchestral barrage over a covered pit: but the muffling of the orchestral sound is too large a price to pay.

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Die Meistersinger, produced by Rudolf Otto Hartmann, returned to the normal conventions. Here again the standard of singing and playing was generally high, with a magnificent performance of the prelude to act III; but Hermann Rohrbach could have done with a stronger voice as Sachs, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf showed some unsteadiness as Eva and Erich Kunz (Beckmesser) lacks the genius for characterization that we saw some months ago in Benno Kusche. Apart from the David (Gerhard Unger) who never came to life, all the other parts including the mastersingers themselves—who, Sachs, Beckmesser and Pogner apart, are in England mistakenly treated as minor—were excellently played and contributed a great deal to the solid merit of the whole. The well lit and altogether appropriate first set raised our hopes that at last we were to see a real attempt at the fusion of music-making with stage technique: but alas, no. The rest were all drab and badly illuminated, with unwanted shadows, with the last the worst of all. Apart from the entirely fictitious perspective of old Nürnberg—and the prototype was less than a hundred miles from Bayreuth!—what possible excuse can there be for dusk to be falling around the distant walls while the sun shines brightly over the singing contest? Even on the operatic stage this kind of perverted miracle must not be allowed to happen: it merely strengthens opera-haters in their conviction that nothing can be too stupid to find a place there.

Autunno Musicale Veneziano

BY

JOHN S. WEISSMANN

COMPARED with last year's festival this was less well organized: then the schedule was executed within twenty days, whereas now the timetable of the events, lasting from the opening performance in the first week of September to the closing concert in the second week of October, proved to be beyond the staying power of the chronicler who regretfully left before the last two concerts were due. The general policy of the programmes is also liable to objection: about half of the works performed were not by contemporary composers and one wondered whether the official title, *XIV Festival Internazionale di Musica Contemporanea*, had any justification. Again, the extreme diversity of the programmes—operas, symphonic works, ballet, choral and chamber music—seemed to be disadvantageous by contrast with the definite character and policy of the previous year. The changes in the programmes were no less irritating: advance schemes announced the performance of Milhaud's *Euménides* which did not materialize; Françaix' woodwind Quintet and Poulenc's Sextet were also cancelled at the last minute owing to the non-appearance of the Woodwind Quintet of the Radiodiffusion Française. How far the programmes of the Schönberg memorial concert and the final concert were affected remains a matter of conjecture.

On the other hand, the "technical and artistic organizer", Ferdinando Ballo, scored a personal triumph in securing the world première of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*: the brilliant evening of 11th September, 1951, will remain a memorable date in the history of twentieth-century music.

Instead of the planned orchestral concert, the festival was inaugurated by a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* performed with Schwarzkopf, Stignani, Tagliavini and Siepi and the chorus and orchestra of La Scala, Milan, under the direction of de Sabata. The "Anno Verdiano" was celebrated by the performance of *Attila*, written "expressly for the great La Fenice Theatre", one of the most successful of the composer's early works. Outside Italy this opera is inexplicably neglected, although some of its pages are equal to the best of *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, *Simone Boccanegra*, and *Forza del Destino*. The impressive grandeur and passionate eloquence of its melodic invention were excellently realized by the singers—Italo Tajo, Grangiacomo Gelfi, Caterina Mancini, Gino Penno, Aldo Bertocci and Dario Caselli—who, together with the chorus and orchestra of the Radio Italiana, Milano, gave such an accomplished performance that one became oblivious of the tedious oratorio (unstaged) rendering in which the work was presented.

Three more stage-works were performed during this festival, all given in one night. Roberto Lupi's *Orfeo*, a cantata for soprano, baritone, chorus, and orchestra written on verses from the fourth book of Virgil's *Georgics*, was given in the form of a ballet with choreography by Jeanine Charrat. Lupi's music is anchored in the "tradition" of early Schönberg: predominantly vertical, his voluptuous harmonic language derives from his dexterous exploitation of dissonances. The melodic invention is confined to short, allusive fragments, developed by imitative and *ostinato* technique. Lupi's main strength lies in his treatment of the chorus: the application of its various registers and the sonority values of short, exclamatory words are suggestive and successful.

Commedia sul Ponte, Martini's one-act opera, is a wholly delightful affair. The action is laid on a bridge each end of which is held by sentinels of forces at war, but whose hostility is temporarily suspended. The inhabitants of a nearby village are allowed to pass, but not to return, for the validity of their permit is lost as soon as they cross. So Popelka, the fiancée of Sykos the fisherman, Bedrom a brewer and his wife Eva, are all forced to stay on this "no-man's-land" which leads to domestic contentions and amorous intrigues. The Schoolmaster, who presently increases the number of captives, is incapable of solving their problems, but the reopening of the bombardment quickly

reconciles the quarrelling parties, and the arrival of the liberating forces ends their involuntary confinement. The music shows the most attractive aspects of Martinů's talents: it is full of verve, brilliance, and sparkling humour. Thus he wittily intermingles strains of Czech popular music with snatches of the Hungarian Rákóczy march, ironically apostrophizing the incessant strife of neighbours: exploits the turns of his native folksongs to create an idyllic atmosphere and captures the veritable spirit of comedy in his briskly whirling Rossinian *ensembles*. To ensure the continuity of the action the vocal parts are in a declamatory style which broadens into lyrical *arioso* at suitable points. The orchestra is discreet throughout, in the sense that it never underlines the obvious with onomatopoeic commonplaces. Martinů's particular gift for figurative inventiveness and for harmonic and contrapuntal equilibrium is consistently in evidence. We note gratefully that the work is scheduled for broadcast performance on the Third Programme. Production and *décor* emphasized the fantastic elements; the costumes seemed to be exaggerated, particularly the daring licentiousness of Popelka's attire.

Boccherini's *Clementina*, a *zarzuela* in two acts, gave undivided enjoyment. The plot is an elaboration of traditional *opéra comique* elements: the confusion of the suitors of two sisters and their poor relation, and its happy outcome. *Clementina* is said to be Boccherini's unique excursion into the field of theatre. The spoken text is missing from the manuscript score: it was reconstructed by Gerardo Guerrieri who, in collaboration with Angelo Ephrikian, adapted it for the stage. The music consists of *arias*, *ariettas*, and some smaller *ensembles*, with two more extensive concerted numbers at the end of each act. It is alternatively playful, dignified, flighty, and sentimental, but always sincere, melodious, and eminently singable. Signore Rizzieri, Simionato, Sciutti and Noni, and Signori Munteanu, Bruscanini and Bianchini deserve credit for their musicianly performance. The musical direction of the two last-named operas was entrusted to Issay Dobrowen.

Marcel Couraud's vocal *ensemble* presented an evening of contemporary choral music. The high quality of their performance will be familiar to listeners to the Third Programme. Milhaud's *Cantate de la Guerre*, a setting of Paul Claudel's lines, is more harmonic than contrapuntal in texture. Sharp exclamatory phrases, smooth lines in thirds and sixths, and *coloratura* polyphonically treated serve as structural units. In his *Quatre Motets pour un Temps de Pénitence* on sacred texts, Poulenc, thinking in large melodic units, exploits the technical resources of the "classical" sixteenth-century tradition. The seriousness and intensity of feeling of the third, "Tenebrae factae sunt", are particularly impressive. Messiaen's *Cinq Rechants pour 12 Voix Mixtes* set to "imaginary" words invented exclusively for the purpose by the composer, recalled the adventurous experiments of the early years of this century. Employing a highly complex rhythmic and "tonal" technique, he treats the voice purely as a series of "timbre" values. At best, these pieces should be understood as interesting explorations of some hitherto unknown possibilities, but in the long run their extravagance is felt to be excessive. Dallapiccola's *Due Cori* on Michelangelo Buonarroti's verses, a comparatively early work, shows him a master of madrigal form: highly amusing in spirit, they reveal remarkable technical accomplishment. Renderings of Josquin des Prés' motet *Almae Christae* and Jannequin's *Bataille de Marignan* replaced the two woodwind chamber works.

The choral and orchestral concert conducted by Mario Rossi at the Teatro La Fenice introduced four Italian works of which the three orchestral pieces—by Carlo Pinelli, Valentino Bucchi, and G. F. Ghedini—were absolute novelties, while Petrassi's Cantata was given previously at the Strasbourg Festival this summer.

Pinelli's *Sinfonia Variata* is based on a series of thirteen notes stated in a straightforward unison and subjected to harmonic and contrapuntal elaboration. Each of the remaining three movements offers commentaries on the announcement of the introduction, corresponding respectively to definite emotional moods: thus the *adagio* is predominantly melodic and lyrical, the *scherzo* rather sensuous and decorative, and the *finale* dramatic. Pinelli utilizes the principle of dodecaphonic technique merely to organize his primary invention; for the rest he relies on well-established traditional methods.

Bucchi's *Ballata per Orchestra* makes an impression of fragmentariness at first hearing; but one soon realizes that it is the result of a conscious principle of musical architecture. A violently dramatic section, with percussive rhythmic elements scored mainly for strident brass, alternates with a passage of bucolic tenderness for melismatic solos on the woodwind. The piece shows a remarkable sense for formal balance and purity.

Ghedini's *L'olmeneta*, a concerto for two cellos and orchestra, is properly speaking a symphonic poem in four movements. Its programme derives from some lines by D'Annunzio; the title itself is said to be a place-name. At first hearing one cannot escape a feeling of academicism: the spectre of Brahms and his forced joviality, particularly in the scherzo, is laid with difficulty; the slow movement—perhaps the most effective of all—is replete with an unexpected Mahlerian nostalgia. The instrumental writing for the solo instruments is of a very high order: not a passage is wasted or drowned by the orchestra. The parts were magisterially interpreted by Massimo Amphiteatroff and Benedetto Mazzacurati.

Petrassi's *Noche Oscura* for mixed chorus and orchestra represents a prominent stage in the composer's development; in this respect it is perhaps even more significant than Stravinsky's opera, because it indicates a conscious choice of, and determined belief in a certain intellectual attitude and the crystallization of his creative processes consequent to it. Only a few remarks on the general character of the work will be given here.

Dark Night is said to occupy pride of place in Spanish literature; its beauties have tempted many translators, among whom Roy Campbell is the latest. Petrassi set the entire poem, consequently the formal design of his work follows, on the whole, the strophic division of the text. Immediately at the opening the "motto" is presented, consisting of a four-note group of two semitones divided by the interval of a third. This group dominates the entire piece, appearing in inversion, retrograde form, and being treated contrapuntally and harmonically; all the subsidiary thematic material is derived from its various melodic and rhythmic alterations. The orchestration and lay-out show Petrassi's particular *timbre* technique—which was first indicated in *Coro di Morti* and whose growth could be observed in the opera *Il Cordovano*, *Sonata da Camera*, and the tragedy *Morte dell'Aria*—having attained its perfect maturity. Contrapuntal and harmonic elements appear in a remarkable balance. While harmonic considerations are strongly in evidence at points of emotional tension, they do not determine the character of the work because the generating "motto" is principally a horizontal invention. Conversely, though the contrapuntal discourse clearly predominates, the climaxes are obtained by vertical methods. This remarkable balance of constructional factors combined with the monothematic principle, an entirely new aspect of Petrassian mentality, makes *Noche Oscura* an outstanding masterpiece of recent times. The chorus and orchestra of the Teatro La Fenice performed the work with devoted attention.

STRAVINSKY IN VENICE

BY

HANS RUTZ

CONDUCTING an opera for the first time in his life, Stravinsky has now demonstrated what he means by the difference between interpretation and execution. Singers and orchestra would possibly have preferred a professional conductor: Stuttgart's Generalmusikdirektor Ferdinand Leitner directed the rehearsals as well as the repeat performances of *The Rake's Progress* with marked success. But under Stravinsky the often misused concept of authenticity became, for the first time, reality. For he is the only living composer who means exactly what he writes and adheres to his opinion when he conducts. No invisible expression is added. Everything is to be found in the score, which is played with minute

precision. And the conductor's gestures are just as economical and as strikingly to the point as the marks in the score.

Mavra, the comic one-act opera, lies far back (1922), *L'Histoire du soldat* yet further (1918). What made the composer write his first full-length opera at 66? But then, he doesn't call it "opera", and it isn't really one, at any rate not in the traditional sense. The librettists, W. H. Auden and the young American Chester Kallman, call it a fable. And there is no doubt that the composer had a hand in the text from the outset. The fable removes the story around Tom Rakewell from all too human sympathy; the same objectifying tendency manifests itself in the form of the music. At the same time, it is idle to point out that number follows number, that the *aria* recovers its old right to the *da capo*, that the recitatives are treated *accompagnato* and *secco*, that simple ternary forms [*Liedformen*] predominate, that the dance is allowed to exercise its instrumental privilege on the stage too, that—in a word—the music takes old forms. There are moments in musical history which show unmistakably that it all depends on the How rather than the What. Stravinsky's opera is such a moment. The form is effective, not because the composer is at home in it, but because it emerges as a completely organic result of a mode of creation which once again has unfurled the banner of primitivism's prerogative. Above all, the opera will at last expose the legend—understandable in days past in view of the nearness of events—of Stravinsky's contradictory stylistic conversion. For here the unity of his development lives within a narrow space. No longer do we find an antithesis between *Sacre du printemps* and *Apollon musagète*, between *Petrouchka* and *Oedipus rex*. What used to appear as the opposites of the "barbaric" and "primitive" on the one hand and the "neoclassical" on the other, have found each other on a level which now clearly proves always to have been mastered by Stravinsky, and by him alone.

From the standpoint of evaluation, the 3 acts, with 3 scenes each, make up a *classical* whole whose maturity reduces previous formulations to the simplest structures. The friction between rhythm and metrical ground-plan is just as alive as in *Sacre*, but the pagan stamping has resolved into a serene rhythmic flow with a new metrical meaning arising—surprisingly or not—out of a rich melodic invention which, without detracting from Stravinsky's style, has the power of immediate characterization. It is in fact the wreath of simply moving song melodies woven around Anne, the figure of innocence, which represents the score's intrinsic value. Stravinsky's artistry, his mastery of styles which had hitherto secured its new meaning mostly through irony, has now been surmounted and superseded by the art of the pure soul. That this depth of feeling could be reached without lapse into a near-at-hand dramatization of the idea of redemption raises the work to Mozart's propinquity.

The *première* had to face new problems of production, and Ebert's was a pioneering effort. Above all, the question arises whether one could not have acted across certain prolix stretches in, particularly, the second half of the 2½ hours' playing time. Nor was the balance altogether successful between the statuary musical build-up and the action which is often interrupted by buffoonery and whose text contains perhaps too many anti-theatrical, i.e. decidedly poetic formulations. Did the production intentionally avoid Hogarth's fullness of life? Stravinsky's music would almost seem to urge an affirmative answer upon us. Gianni Ratto's designs, too, contented themselves with a neat delineation of eighteenth-century London without coming anywhere near Hogarth's characterization.

Schwarzkopf's Anne dominated the stage completely; her great art made the chaste fire of this figure—which will now have to be counted among the most beautiful upon the operatic stage—radiate in the purest light. Otokar Kraus was a gentlemanly devil of imposing vocal power. It was a pity, though, that the young American tenor Robert Rounsville proved unable, both histrionically and vocally, to cope with the part of Tom Rakewell which, it is true, presents singular difficulties. In the smaller rôles, Nell Tangueman (Mother Goose), Jennie Tourel (Baba, the Turk) and Raffaele Arie (Trulove) distinguished themselves. The *première*—the first, incidentally, of a stage-work in English on

a non-British or -American stage—earned the composer and his helpers, Schwarzkopf foremost, a great deal of applause, without, however, achieving a downright popular success. But that was to be expected. This task will no doubt be accomplished by the numerous impending productions of the work in wellnigh all the important opera houses of Europe.

Trans. Hans Keller

New Directives for East German Composers

BY
EVERETT HELM

ON 18th April, 1951, the artistic division of Germany, long in the making, became a fact. On this date, a long article entitled "The Fight against Formalism in Art and Literature, for a Progressive German Culture" appeared in the *Tägliche Rundschau*, official daily of the Soviet Government in Germany. In this article the issue, a mixture of artistic and political considerations, was squarely joined, and the new cultural policy of the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (Russian Zone of Germany) was unequivocally promulgated. The tenets and *dicta*, which are henceforth to measure and to rule artistic production in all fields in Eastern Germany, grew out of the Congress of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) which met on the 15th, 16th and 17th March, 1951.

The situation of music in Germany is so little understood (or so grossly misunderstood) abroad that a report on recent developments appears to be definitely in order. I recently received a letter from an Italian musician in which the cities Wiesbaden and Weimar were entirely confused, without the political consequences thereof being drawn. Wiesbaden is in Western Germany (Bundesrepublik), Weimar in Eastern Germany; the difference is one of night and day, of East and West. Then the American conductor Alfred Wallenstein, who recently appeared in a very successful concert as guest conductor of the RIAS (Berlin) Symphony Orchestra, reported that Americans, too, were on the whole uninformed regarding the German situation as it affects the arts, and, more specifically, music.

In order partially to dispel this confusion, I propose to quote the salient passage from the article of 18th April that appeared in the *Tägliche Rundschau* and that laid down the law of the land to the composers, painters, architects, sculptors, poets, playwrights, theatre directors, radio writers, film producers, puppeteers, cabaret and variety artists, actors and critics of Eastern Germany.

The main task of cultural policy was formulated as follows by the third congress of the SED:

"In regard to cultural policy as well, the fight for peace, for the democratic unity of Germany and for the guarantee of our anti-fascist democratic order is the centre of our entire work. Through our cultural policy men are educated to become true democrats, independent and responsible citizens and highly qualified professionals, who place their entire knowledge and ability in the service of peace, progress and democracy."

"This education can only be carried out through the relentless fight against the cannibalistic teachings of the imperialist warmongers. Every attempt to describe these enemy ideologies objectively is equivalent to the propagation of these ideologies. Therefore it is the decisive task of our cultural policy to effect a radical reversal in all phases of cultural life and to put a relentless stop to the lukewarmness and compromise."

The article mentions a number of East German writers, composers and films which deserve special praise, then goes on to make a comparison with Western Germany:

"In contrast to the cultural success of the DDR, the cultural life of Western Germany and Berlin has reached a catastrophic low point, because of the ruinous influence of American monopoly-capitalism. The cultural barbarousness of Americanism shows itself for example in the curtailment of freedom in artistic creation, in the persecution and boycott of progressive scientists and artists."

"It is the task of progressive cultural producers (Kulturschaffende) in Western Germany to support the referendum against the rearmament (of Western Germany) and the signing of a German peace treaty in 1951, and (to support) the resistance against rearmament, for the creation of a unified, democratic, peaceful and independent Germany, not only through personal actions but also through the content of their artistic production."

In the next section, headed "Weaknesses and Failures of Cultural Work", the article points out what is wrong with the cultural picture in Eastern Germany up to the present.

"Party Member Johannes R. Becher said in our third Party Day: 'It would be as senseless as it would be shameful to deny, or to excuse the fact that we cultural creators, in our cultural achievements, have remained far behind the demands (Forderungen) of our day and of our epoch. What have we, with a few exceptions, to compare with the success of the Activist movement?' [The Activist movement involves a system of special awards and citations for workers, farmers, etc., who achieve an especially high production record.] 'The chief cause for the lag in the arts behind the demands of the times is the result of the domination of formalism in art, as well as the lack of clarity regarding the direction and methods of cultural creation in the DDR.'

"Formalism means disintegration and destruction of art itself. The formalists deny that the decisive worth [Bedeutung] of a work of art lies in the content, in the idea, in the thought. According to them the worth of a work of art lies not in the content but in the form. Whenever the question of form is given an independent value, art loses its humanistic and democratic character.

"In order to prepare the peoples of the American satellite countries to pull the chestnuts of the American capitalists out of the fire in a third world war, and in order to weaken the resistance of those peoples who are in the camp of peace and democracy, the representatives of imperialism make every effort to destroy their national pride and national consciousness.

"Capitalistic production is the enemy of certain spiritual branches of production, such as art and poetry.' [Karl Marx: *Theorien über den Mehrwert*.] 'In the imperialistic epoch, capitalism destroys true art.'

"Because formalistic art does not transmit the perception of reality but separates art from the people and leads to abstraction, it objectively serves imperialism."

A series of examples of formalism follows: The wall-paintings in the Friedrichstrasse railroad station in Berlin; the cover of a calendar by Max Lingner; several examples of architecture; Orff's opera *Antigone*; the opera by Brecht and Dessau, *The Trial of Lucullus*, which was prohibited after the dress rehearsal in Eastern Berlin; the staging of Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla* in the Berlin State Opera (the occasion of sharp attack by the Soviet-controlled press and subsequent self-incriminations by the theatre director) and various other works. Theatre, operetta, variety and puppet shows and cabaret are then criticized for their "formalistic tendencies".

The next section of the long article is entitled "Against Kitsch" [Gegen Kitsch]. "Kitsch is pseudo-art. Kitsch is also artistic form with falsified content. The imperialistic culture-destroyers employ the weapon Kitsch to poison the consciousness, and lower the taste of the masses. The most important question for the development of art in the DDR is the continuation of the great achievements of the past, the classical heritage."

Under the heading "The Fight for Realism in Art and Literature": "To overcome the domination of formalistic art, it is necessary to develop realistic art. In order to develop realistic art, we take our orientation from the great socialistic Soviet Union, which has created the most advanced culture of the world." [Sic: "Die die fortschrittlichste Kultur der Welt geschaffen hat".]

"Therefore a true, historically accurate description [of the times] must be bound up with the task of educating the people in the spirit of the fight for a unified, democratic and independent Germany, for the fulfilment of the five-year-plan, and for peace."

"It must be stated that literature and art criticism has not yet demonstrated its capacity on the one hand to help writers and artists in their forward development and on the other to attract workers to literature and art."

Then follows the concluding section: "The Immediate Objectives in Art and Literature". The Central Committee deems the following nine measures to be necessary:

- (1) Founding of the State Commission for Artistic Matters [Staatliche Kommission für Kunstagelegenheiten] to supervise theatre, music, dance and art, as well as to support the development of amateur art, and to develop the artistic side of social organizations.

(2) "In order to improve artistic production in the DDR, it is necessary to preserve the closest relationship of literature and art with the current tasks, especially the five-year-plan. The five-year-plan provides not only countless themes which demand an artistic presentation, but its fulfilment demands also outstanding artistic achievements in the realization of various single projects."

"The greatest aid to the artistic presentation of to-day's problems is the study of how such problems were presented by the classical artists and authors in their times."

Theatre, film, radio and puppet theatre must present current problems. "Also in the fight against Kitsch the radio has an important function, particularly in the fight against the decadence of dance music."

(3) The educational system must be improved and systematized. "The students must be introduced to the classical heritage, and the classics must be given special attention. The study of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin on dialectic and historical materialism as well as on art and literature is the most important prerequisite for the proper understanding of the rôle of art in the development of society."

(4) "It is recommended that the party members in the Cultural Association for the Democratic Rehabilitation of Germany place the emphasis of their work on obtaining active participation of all cultural producers in East and West Germany, in the fight for peace, the intensive support of the fight against rearmament and for the conclusion of a German peace treaty in 1951. It is important to organize the fight against American cultural barbarism, in order to create a democratic culture that stems from our classical cultural heritage."

(5) The authors' organization is directed to concern itself with current problems, and it is suggested that a periodical be founded.

(6) The artists' organization should publish a magazine including reproduction of suitable pictures, and concentrating on the problems of modern art. An exhibition of new works should be organized this year.

(7) The composers' organization is directed to carry on a constant discussion and criticism of formalism in order to overcome the present musical backwardness. Folksongs should be widely used in compositions.

(8) For all branches of art it is necessary to organize the study of Marxism and Leninism, in order that artists can better portray life "in its upward development". "Since the active participation of artists in political life and in the democratic reconstruction (for example in the work of the Peace Committee, the National Front, the Social Organizations and through close, direct contact with activists, workers, etc.) is the condition for a successful portrayal of to-day's problems, the leaders of artistic organizations must see to it that their members take regular part in this work."

"In order to fulfil their task, these organizations must publish translations of works, theoretical treatises and discussion from the Soviet Union and other Peoples' Republics."

(9) The Central Committee recommends to the SED members in the Union of Artists (stage, film, music, vaudeville, radio) to encourage discussions of literature and artistic questions.

"The Central Committee of the Socialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands states that all producers of art in the Deutsche Demokratische Republik will have every support of our party, in order to overcome the cultural backwardness, and in order to transform literature and art into a mighty weapon of the German people in its fight for the solution of its problems."

I have not changed the order of ideas of the original article, nor have I regrouped them for the sake of clarity or logicality. The form in which the article appeared is typical of current journalistic practice in Eastern Germany.

Book Reviews

Heinrich Isaac's Choralis Constantinus, Book III. Transcribed from the Formschneider First Edition (Nuremberg, 1555) by Louise Cuyler. (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press.) 1950. Pp. 456. \$6.00.

Isaac's *Choralis Constantinus*, written during the last fifteen years of the composer's life, which ended in 1517, completed and copied under the supervision of his favourite pupil, Ludwig Senfl in 1530 and finally published between 1550 and 1555 at the Formschneider Press of Nuremberg, is the most comprehensive attempt to collect polyphonic settings of portions of the Proper of the Mass for the whole liturgical year, including Propers for the principal feasts and Saints' days. Leonin's and Perotin's *Magnus Liber Organii* (*ca.* 1200) alone may compare with it in liturgical scope and musical grandeur, and only one great composer presented his age with a cycle of settings dedicated to the *Proprium Missae* after Isaac's great enterprise: William Byrd in his *Gradualia* of 1605/7. Of the three books into which the *Choralis Constantinus* was divided by the Formschneider Press, hitherto only books I and II have been reprinted in modern transcription (publ. 1898 and 1909 respectively in vols. V and XVI of the DTOE). The inaccessibility of book III has always been deplored by students and scholars as one of the major *lacunae* in modern musicology. Even as late as 1950 Walther Lipphardt in his meritorious *Geschichte des mehrstimmigen Proprium Missae* (Heidelberg, 1950) refers to book III as still not available in modern reprint. On the dust-cover of this volume which is clearly and attractively produced by the economical litho process but can hardly compete with the printing standard of the Austro-German DENKMÄLER series, Alfred Einstein hails this publication of book III as "proof once more that America has taken possession of European musicology". This exultant assertion seems a trifle premature, especially when the reader happens to be confronted with the bulky volume of the first catalogue of J. S. Bach's works: Wolfgang Schmieder's *Thematisch-systematisches Verzeichnis der Werke J. S. Bachs*, published by Breitkopf & Härtel (Leipzig, 1950) using paper and printing vastly superior to the simultaneous American production of Isaac's book III. In happy contrast to her celebrated apologist, Miss Cuyler in her scholarly critical and analytical commentary is anxious to pay eloquent and humble tribute to the past achievements of Austro-German scholarship. She has certainly made a thorough study of all Continental research devoted to Isaac, carefully spotlighting the very Sequence, "Virginalis Turma sexus" (*op. cit.* page 445 ff.), which was left unfinished at Isaac's death and had to be completed by Senfl himself (*cf.* the interesting facsimile of the respective page in the Formschneider edition, publ. on page 21 of this reprint). A separate chapter of Miss Cuyler's introduction is dedicated to a characterization of book III, in which she amply deals with the intricate and often baffling technical aspects of the transcription. In a tabulated appendix to this she has listed all the Latin texts of the Liturgy, as used in book III and related them to the corresponding texts used in the present-day *Graduale Romanum*. (Neither Miss Cuyler nor any earlier scholar has been able to locate the actual *Graduale* from which Isaac culled his actual plainsong material.) Miss Cuyler's painstaking task of transcribing book III into modern staff notation is based on a microfilm of the copy of 1555, now in the possession of the British Museum. It is not for the undersigned to attempt an evaluation of her editorial labours. This has already been done by an expert on the period—R. Thurston Dart—who recently published a brilliant critical study on the subject (*cf. Music & Letters*, XXXII/1, January, 1951, page 82 ff.), including an *Errata-list* which might or might not elicit a later reply from Miss Cuyler herself. While she has faithfully transcribed and reprinted all compositions of book III devoted to the Proper of the Mass (*i.e.* Introitus, Graduals, Communions, Alleluias, etc.), she has so far excluded the five settings of the Ordinary of the Mass which were included in the Formschneider edition of 1555. These ordinaryes are in process of transcription and will appear as a separate publication (*op. cit.* page 16). The volume offers a unique insight into the

mature style of the latest of the Flemish polyphonists whose rugged individuality forms a telling contrast to the aristocratic equipoise represented by Palestrina's liturgical style, which Miss Cuyler with unnecessary acerbity characterizes as being "pale and flaccid" in comparison. It seems a pity that Miss Cuyler has only just skirted the fascinating problem of *Aufführungspraxis* in connection with Isaac's great work. She believes that some contralto and tenor parts seem to suggest instrumental realization (*cf.* page 22) and she ultimately stresses the importance of the "realization in actual performance". But she studiously refrains from delving deeper into this highly controversial matter, thereby tacitly underlining the relevancy of Walther Lipphardt's eloquent plea (*op. cit.* page 35) for practical editions of Isaac's monumental collection.

H. F. R.

18th Century Symphonies. By Adam Carse. Pp. iv + 75. (Augener.) 1951. 7s. 6d.

The seven chapters and two appendices, by a specialist on the subject, give a lucid and admirable account of the development of the symphony from the French *Ouverture* and the Italian *Sinfonia*, and are in passing a valuable essay on the dissemination and publication of music during the years when only parts were obtainable and full scores (except of overtures to operas) had not come in. His deductions have been made from the sets of eight parts (four string parts and two each for oboes and horns) that exist now only in libraries. He shows very clearly that works written for this combination had no end but the giving of immediate pleasure, that the themes came from a common stock and that organization, as we know it, in the symphonies of Haydn and Mozart was not the gift of the multitudinous composers who paved the way for them. In this respect the comparison of the opening of the overture to *Die Entführung* with an example from an unnamed composer (p. 67) is only too eloquent. The second example from the "Surprise" (p. 65) is misquoted; E should be a crotchet in the second half of the second bar: in fact each note is *not* repeated four times, though this does not affect his argument materially. The only other thing that troubles me is the attack on the "purist" (p. 6) *re* arranging these early symphonies, for unless they are given with a "conductor" at a harpsichord or keyboard instrument, we are not hearing them as they were intended to sound, though "improved" it may very well be. A book to be kept by one.

E. H. W. M.

The Art and Science of Voice Training. By F. C. Field-Hyde. Pp. xii + 223. (O.U.P.). 1950. 18s.

The wide and patient research into the scientific reasons for every theory and aspect of voice production postulated by Mr. Field-Hyde would seem to make his book a very encyclopaedia of vocal teaching. It is an excellent lucid work, the result of a lifetime spent in pursuit of its subject, and should prove of incalculable value to every teacher.

No method of approach from the standpoint of student and teacher is neglected. Accepting costal inspiration as the fundamental basis of all sound vocal tone, and utterly rejecting the school of abdominal breathing, at one time so popular and so disastrous to singing, he gives method and means by which costal inspiration can be achieved. He then proceeds to emphasize the unlimited importance of vowel sound.

The object of vocal training being the true placing of the voice, he defines this as "voice placing is the art of so adjusting the vocal resonators as to produce on all vowels in the most natural way the ideal tone of each individual voice".

It follows then, that it is essential for the pupil to have a clear understanding of the nature and above all, the potentialities of all vowels and their application to tone. He explains how he gradually discovered that their practice and application could effectively modify and even radically change a voice.

Standard of tone depends on the taste of the teacher, each teacher training with his own ideal in view, and he often sees possibilities in a voice yet hidden from its possessor. The qualities required to make a successful teacher are formulated as, first, an acute and discriminating ear, next a well trained voice with which he can exemplify broadly all the differences in tone quality both good and bad.

The only really effective way of teaching tone quality being by pattern and imitation, the importance of the ability to demonstrate on the teacher's part cannot be too strongly emphasized.

The author gives detailed ways of dealing with every likely fault and flaw in the student's voice and every possible means of correcting these and developing a voice to its utmost capacity. He stresses the value of *Messa di voce*, of the much misunderstood nasal resonance, humming, discusses the question of open versus closed tone, and the various principles of sustained and florid technique and the *Bel Canto* school are all exhaustively and scientifically expounded.

The elucidation of the teacher and pupil relationship is masterly, the basis being relentless criticism on one side and a willing acceptance on the other; the question of personality must of necessity play a big part here.

But what is most imposing and impressive in this work is that nothing has been accepted on its face value as a fact without intensive study and research into its every aspect, medically, scientifically, vocally, alone or aided by the best capacities available.

The author describes a lifetime of unceasing intensive labour, a love of his subject and a comprehensive and profound knowledge which must arouse the admiration and envy of every teacher.

Bel Canto. By Cornelius L. Reid. Pp. 211. (Coleman-Ross.) 1950. \$4.50.

That singing from the purely vocal point of view has deteriorated cannot be denied by any privileged to have heard the great exponents of even twenty-five years ago: Melba, surely a perfect exponent of an ideal production, Caruso, giant among tenors, Destinn, Lilli Lehmann, Sembrich, to name but a few. It is difficult to believe that the present dearth of really great singers is due to a decline in available material. Therefore it follows that the failure must lie in the present methods of teaching and that what the world lacks are teachers trained in the great traditions of the past, and students willing and able to face the long years of the slow but sure methods of the golden age of song.

This at any rate, is the underlying reasoning of Mr. Reid's book. Interesting and detailed as is his exposition of the theories and art of *Bel Canto*, it lacks the concrete value for students and teachers of Mr. Field-Hyde's because he gives no detailed results which he himself has attained with students in his own teaching practice when applying these methods adapted to modern conditions. Few students nowadays can allow themselves a period of six to nine years preparatory study, many of them spent in cultivating a single note or simple exercise and *always* in the presence of the teacher, necessitating what amounts to a daily lesson.

The author believes that the era of great teachers ended with the Marchesini and Garcia the younger. To the latter must be ascribed part of the blame for its degeneration, for, discarding the precepts inherited from his famous father, he tried to achieve a short cut to his results and by his invention of the laryngoscope opened the field of teaching to the medico, physiologist and scientist, who, lacking real knowledge of the voice as such and the principles of true singing, hastened its ruin.

That the singers of the Golden Era possessed extraordinary powers cannot be doubted. It is only necessary to refer to contemporary reports such as the *Historia Musica*, 1610-1680. The important fact is that such vocalization was almost a commonplace to those schooled in the *Bel Canto* method.

Comprehensive reports of this were left by Tosi, himself a famous singer, afterwards one of the most renowned of teachers, in his *Observations on the Florid Song*, or, most complete material of all, Mancini in his *Practical Reflections on the Figurative Art of Singing* (Milan, 1776).

Translated, *Bel Canto* means beautiful singing. A truly beautiful tone signifies that the vocal mechanism is functioning correctly and in complete harmony with aesthetic principles. Perfect tone finds its expression in perfect freedom.

Every voice was believed to be able to produce resonant tones over a wide range.

Power was a definite factor. All things being equal, every voice properly used should sound lovely and musical. Resonance and an opulent tone were considered essential.

With a correct technique of tone production a voice acquired not only power but extreme agility. Prodigious agility and electrifying coloration were so notable that training was undoubtedly directed to that end.

How was this achieved? First by constant striving after vowel purity. This is stressed by every teacher. Slow sustained, often single-note exercises. Then, the comprehension of the registers. Early teachers spoke only of two, the *voce di petto*, or chest, and the *voce di testa* or head register—also called the falsetto. Two only, each handled separately and to its fullest capacity and then at a given point in the training linked by the *voce finta* or feigned voice.

Nowadays head voice and falsetto are no longer regarded as synonymous and this was, according to the author, the first disastrous point of departure from the old methods. Gradually the comprehension of the interdependence of the registers was lost, the break which divides all voices became an "insurmountable problem", depriving voices of power and range, and ruin set in. The author goes into this provocative question in great detail, stating that the failure to grasp this aspect of the registers led to a fatal revision of training technique.

It would be interesting and revealing to know how far the author has been able to apply the old methods which he believes produced the great singers of the past and the exact results he has achieved in the process in his own teaching practice. Were they successful, one could hope, in the course of a few years, not only for some great singers but for a revival of the great traditions.

The Foundations of Singing. By Franklyn Kelsey. Pp. 117. (Williams & Norgate.) 1950. 7s. 6d.

It is obvious that Mr. Kelsey has very definite ideas, considerable knowledge and has devoted much thought to the subject of singing, but his book appears to suffer from an over-concentration on the sheer mechanics of tone production, and the wood, in this case a beautiful singing tone, is lost to sight in the trees. The author takes an almost desperate view of the present state of singing in this country and ascribes a great deal of blame to the prevalent method of speech training in schools, believing that this leads to the vogue of so-called "sung speech" so disastrous to the art of vocalization. He asserts that instead of singing we "talk on a tune", a lethargic method of tone production which is leading us to a complete extinction of worthwhile singing.

But surely it is not only this country which is suffering from a dearth of great singers and voices; they are hard to discern anywhere.

The acceptance of the *coup-de-glotte* method of tone attack, the stressing of the actual mechanics of the use of the larynx in tonal attack could prove dangerous now as, indeed, it has in the past in any but the most expert hands.

His explanation of the process of breathing is liable too to serious misunderstanding. The raised chest, indrawn stomach muscles, upward press of the diaphragm are apt to lead to great rigidity. As Mr. Reid states in his book, *Bel Canto*, the great masters of the past believed that breathing should be assumed to be a natural function, and did not stress the mechanics, the right production of which would lead to correct costal breathing. That a quick intake of breath must perforce be clavicular is surely erroneous. Any well trained singer can take a quick deep breath with the greatest ease.

Mr. Kelsey finds himself in agreement with the old theory of the two registers, but he uses the designation falsetto in the modern sense, and not in that of the *Bel Canto* era when it was synonymous with head voice.

But that it is correct that the sound makes the word and not *vice versa* cannot be doubted, and that all languages are vocal to a well trained singer is certainly true. The emphasis laid on sensation, acoustic localities, the air compressor, and articulator, etc., could not but be confusing and bewildering to a student. It is difficult to believe that the total application of all Mr. Kelsey's theories, however mechanically and technically sound,

would be sufficient to produce a beautiful singing tone. There is surely far more to it than that; and the greater simplicity of approach, based on the few simple but fundamental principles taught by the great masters of the grand tradition, the greater the results achieved, certainly from the student's standpoint. Most of these great teachers were ignorant of all but the simplest physiological rules. Knowledge of the simple facts of the structure of the throat and larynx and the mechanics of tone production are a necessity. More than this only leads to confusion and conflict in the student's mind. His job is to concentrate on beauty of tone and above all, to cultivate a discriminating and acute ear for that purpose if he wishes to be a singer.

D. F. R.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Pp. 200.
(American Record Collectors' Exchange, 825, Seventh Avenue, New York, 19.)
1949. \$3·75.

Gradually and piecemeal, the annals of the gramophone world are being assembled. The long-awaited *World Encyclopaedia* of Messrs. Clough and Cuming, which is to be published during this year, will include, we are told, all electrical recordings of any artistic consequence. That takes us back, roughly speaking, to 1925, when the transition from acoustic to electric recording occurred. But the gramophone, as a medium for serious music, is more than twice as old as that. It was towards the end of the nineteenth century that records of "good" music began to make a spasmodic appearance; and the new edition of Robert Bauer's standard catalogue published by Sidgwick and Jackson includes all such "lateral-cut" records (the normal kind) from the earliest days until about 1909. In the preface to that volume, Bauer and his international helpers expressed the hope of producing, some day, two further volumes: one continuing the "lateral-cuts" from 1909 to 1925; and another covering all important cylinders and "vertical-cut" discs, such as Edisons and Pathés, on which is to be found much forgotten but artistically valuable material. Both these are immense undertakings, for the completion of which we may have to wait many years; consequently, the present volume, though it covers only part of the field, is a very useful provisional source of information.

Mr. Moses has aimed at including all records of the celebrity class recorded or issued in America up to 1925. This is not so parochial a scheme as might be thought. Of the pre-electric records which we now find interesting, the great majority are vocal, mostly operatic; this is because the beautifully trained and strongly individual voices of those days came through with remarkable clarity. The other day Sir Thomas Beecham remarked that vocal recording had hardly advanced in forty years; on the other hand, vocal art has very evidently declined. During the period covered by this book, almost all the greatest singers of the world were engaged, year after year, by the Metropolitan; and therefore the Camden studios of the Victor Company became the most important centre of activity in the recording world. Many of the greatest singers (for example, Sembrich, Eames, Schumann-Heink, Galli-Curci, Ponselle) recorded only in America; others, such as Plançon and Caruso, accomplished there by far the largest and most valuable part of their recorded work. Thus, the entries under such names as these amount to complete, or almost complete, "discographies". The author has taken great pains to make his lists accurate and complete, giving both single-sided and double-sided numbers, including many unpublished records, and adding a useful numerical index to the principal Victor Red Seal series. Valuable also, and even harder to find elsewhere, is the information about Brunswicks and American Columbias.

D. S.-T.

The Record Guide. By Edward Sackville-West and Desmond Shawe-Taylor. Pp. 763.
(Collins.) 1951. 30s.

This volume, the first of its kind to be produced in this country, must be classed with the American *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music* (1936: 1942: 1948), the several volumes compiled by David Hall and the forthcoming *magnum opus* of Messrs. Clough and Cuming. Its principal drawback is that the authors have deliberately

restricted its contents to those records which are now, or they hope will be available through normal channels in this country. They have further increased the selectivity of their work by including from the above category only those records which their own taste and considerable experience lead them to regard as the best; understandable, but we are in trouble almost at once. For instance, the recent Decca version (Renardy/Concertgebouw/Münch) is recommended as the best record of the Brahms violin Concerto; had the scope of their work allowed our authors to venture a little further afield they could scarcely have overlooked the Deutsche Grammophon set (Gioconda de Vito/Berlin State Opera/van Kempen) which is much better Brahms in every respect. Still, this, you may claim, is a matter of opinion: let us take another example. For Strauss' *Don Quixote* and *Heldenleben* our authors recommend the recent versions by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under Beecham: under their self-imposed restrictive practices they have no need to mention that there exist authoritative and recent versions conducted by the composer and available from the current Deutsche Grammophon catalogue, nor do they.

For many years, since the advent of so-called "high-fidelity" reproduction, "critical" opinion of gramophone records has diverged to such an extent between one reviewer and the next that the amateur enthusiast may readily be forgiven for writing off the critics and relying entirely on his own judgment. In part this confusion is due to incompetent journalists achieving the doubtful honour of public print for their inexpert opinions of a highly technical product. This is not the place for a classified list of offenders, but anyone familiar with a fair proportion of our more popular periodicals should be able to compile one for himself; gramophone records are no more suitable material for "fringe" journalists than caviare as a staple diet for pigs. Another source of the trouble, and one which is easier to appreciate than to rectify, derives from the critic's basic attitude to the gramophone: whether he is by nature something of an anthologist, prone to collect records of particular performances of high artistic merit without much, if any regard for the engineering aspect of the whole process, or whether he is obsessed with his quest for the record and reproducing machine which together will achieve the closest approximation to the kind of sound he associates with his favourite concert hall.

Sackville-West and Shawe-Taylor seem to have tried to avoid both these extremes. Certainly they could not be placed in our latter category; but they have included some recommendations which may be questioned on the score of obsolescence—cases in which the recording process has dated to such an extent that the result obtainable can be no more than a pale shadow of the real music. The eighteen-year-old records of *Rosenkavalier*, with Richard Mayr, are a case in point.

Once these limitations are recognized and accepted, the book can and must be given an enthusiastic reception. A model of conscientious and painstaking workmanship, it is also a mine of information about "interesting" records which, for example, your reviewer had entirely forgotten or never known existed. The reader who is curious about the music of Carl Nielsen (and more of us should be) will be surprised to find how much of it is available in recorded form; though the Czech composer J. B. Foerster, whose fourth Symphony is a masterpiece theoretically available on Supraphon, receives no mention. The 34 pages devoted to long-playing records do not amount to very much, a criticism perhaps explained by the fact that barely twelve months can have elapsed between the introduction of LP into England and this volume going to press. Finally, in the next edition may we be given some explanation of the various letter- and number-codes employed between the run-out groove and the edge of the label? Understanding of these is by no means widespread.

Toscanini. By Howard Taubman. Pp. 352, illustrated. (Odhams.) 1951. 15s.

As one who was carried away by the resurgent magnificence of Verdi's *Requiem* under Toscanini's direction in London before the war, but who valued even more his habit of inculcating a proper discipline into the members of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, your reviewer would have welcomed any book which made a plausible attempt to explain how

such results were achieved. Unfortunately Mr. Taubman has chosen the simpler alternative of writing a sketchy historical account of the maestro's career, including a number of the legendary tales of his temperament or temper together with some which were unfamiliar, and also some digressions on politics. Fluently written in colloquial American, this narrative will be widely read, with a degree of enjoyment in more or less inverse proportion to the range of the reader's musical knowledge. The concert world of to-day desperately needs conductors with the energy, integrity and single-mindedness of Toscanini; but the young aspirant to a position of similar eminence and authority will find little here that will help him on his way.

G. N. S.

Gramophone Records

THE CRITIC AND THE TECHNICIAN*

BY

H. VOSE GREENOUGH, JNR.

It is difficult to say which of the two subjects—recording or the reproduction of records—should rank as the most important. One particularly harmful aspect of this matter is the current almost complete confusion of the critic in technical matters. A comparison of reviews by several record critics on the same recording will immediately demonstrate this fact. There is no point in record criticism upon which disagreement exists as on the technical aspect. Such a state of confusion, to be fair, is not entirely the fault of the critic. It is the result of the semantics of a new industry and technique—the inability to express in understandably simple terms the merits and faults of music in reproduction. In part, this is due to a lack of agreement, even among technicians themselves, as to the proper nomenclature for certain properties of sound. More often, however, it is due to a basic lack of technical knowledge on the part of a critic, which is often revealed by liberal and faulty use of the few technical expressions generally agreed upon by engineers.

That record critics devote the most space to discussions of the musical performance is understandable. I do not quarrel with this approach. The music is the most important part of the record. Its suitability for reproduction and the manner in which it is performed form the proper material for the critic. The actual techniques of recording do not enter into the picture unless, by virtue of outstandingly good or outrageously bad recording, the reproductive technique intrudes itself upon the critic.

One might, at this point, define that quality which marks the recording as outstandingly fine, inasmuch as this clarifies the opposite condition. Without definitive knowledge of qualitative goodness, no basis can exist on which a recording can be criticized on technical grounds. To this writer, the most important single factor is faithfulness to the original sound as performed under ideal acoustical conditions and reproduced under equally ideal conditions. As this involves personal taste, it calls forth interminable argument. It is a well-known fact that no two listeners or engineers are in agreement regarding the ideal listening conditions in a concert hall or recording studio. It is therefore hardly to be expected that agreement on this matter will exist with the most informed critics.

Contrary to general belief, ideal reproduction in recording is fortunately easier of attainment inasmuch as it is concerned with the transformation of the recorded sound into actual sound in a room which involves purely mechanical and electronic processes. This can be achieved by careful attention to detail in the matter of choice of turntable, speaker, pickup and amplifier-equalizer, plus careful mounting of the speaker for best

*Reprinted from *The American Record Guide* (September, 1951), by kind permission of the author and the editor, Mr. Peter Hugh Reed [Ed.]

results in the room to be used for listening. For monaural or "single ear" listening, this ideal is not far from being realized to-day in the homes of many listeners.

This condition, unfortunately, cannot be applied to the phonograph used by many critics. Therein lies the vital point of my argument. The record critic's phonograph should be the best available, and of equal importance the critic should know how to operate it intelligently in order to be able to criticize from a technical standpoint. From experience in listening to reproducers used by record critics throughout the country, the writer is of the opinion that of all the factors in the record critic's ability or inability to practise his responsible profession, knowledge of operating intelligently the equipment in use is the one in which the critic is most often inadequate. It is the least understood functional requirement. With remarkably few exceptions, the standard of reproduction in the homes and offices of critics is woefully bad.

One may ask what incentive is given the engineer to produce truly fine recording, such as is coming from all major and many smaller manufacturers to-day, when the fate of his work is to be judged on a machine with a cheap turntable, an ancient and too heavily weighted crystal pickup, a badly distorting amplifier and a commercial loud-speaker that is more often than not poorly mounted and located. From such a system, every distortion known to science can arise, and usually does. Even the finest reproducing system under inexpert handling can yield a false impression of what is actually on the record, and one of the commonest faults in criticism to-day is false or unjust comments on reproduction based on incorrect setting of the reviewer's machine.

Critics of national repute are guilty of making unjustifiable comments like "lacks bass", "tinny", or "fuzzy recording". Such comments could have been avoided had a small amount of attention to the proper adjustment of the instrument been made to compensate for the recorded characteristic. This would have yielded a perfect reproduction of the recorded sound. It is occasionally heart-breaking for an engineer (I speak from bitter experience) to find his best work at the mercy of critics in the category described above. Such treatment as he accords a recording on occasion is not only unfair to the manufacturer but also to the record buyer, who is thus discouraged from purchasing a falsely condemned recording. This then is a plea to record critics in particular, and to listeners in general to examine their phonographs. A few simple tests with standard, commercially available test records can reveal turntable troubles like "wows" and "flutters", which will be discussed at greater length in future articles.

Tests for distortion are more elaborate, but can be avoided by use of high-quality amplifiers, pickups and speakers known to have low distortion. Of the utmost importance, time taken to learn to operate the equipment will not be spent in vain. No two recording companies record with the same "characteristic" these days, hence improper compensation for either bass response or treble pre-emphasis in the reproduction can yield totally false results on playback. The disc of one firm can be, when played on an incorrectly balanced machine, impossibly shrill and lacking in bass, whereas the record of another firm may sound perfect with the same setting of controls. Unless this is understood by both the critic and the record buyer, the best recording engineering will go unappreciated by a lot of people.

Now the reader may wonder why, in this first article, I have directed my blast against the critic. It is the obligation of every responsible magazine to be able to vouch for the technical knowledge of its critics. When one buys a record, one expects not only a fine, well-integrated and possibly realistic performance of the work purchased, but one has a right also to expect competent engineering. Concise technical commentary on that record should help the buyer to make up his mind whether the reproduction maintains the high standard set by performance—if not, why not. If the recording is truly bad, it is the critic's duty to warn the buyer. By correct use of such terms as "liveness" and others defining the quality of the reproduced sound, the critic can help the buyer choose a recording to his taste. If the critic does not understand the nature of the technical deficiency of a recording, he can easily warn his reader that such exists without writing a paragraph of meaningless words as some do. It is a foregone conclusion that reproduced

sound varies with different equipment, especially in regard to speaker setups. Therefore, descriptions of some technical deficiencies are best generalized. There are those who are opposed to spacious quartet recording, and also those who prefer dead-studio symphonic reproduction. Such qualities can be correctly described by the critic. Where real distortion exists—as opposed to any arising in a critic's machine—this should be described. By so doing, the critic definitely helps his readers.

One cannot, I presume, hope for that rarity, the completely unbiased reviewer. In some ways it is good for the critic to have a slight bias, provided it is known and allowances are made for it. If, from time to time, critics were to state their basic preferences in recorded sound, this would clarify their position for readers. Failing such an "almost too good to be true" state of affairs, we can only hope that our critics will take time to learn their technical vocabulary and to adjust their phonographs in the proper manner.

Reger: Vier Tondichtungen nach Arnold Böcklin, Op. 128.

German Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Keilberth.

Telefunken GX 61010-2. 29s. 1½d.

To all those who may be inspired by this set of records to carry out a little extra-musical research on the work's origins, one word of warning. Don't track down reproductions of the Böcklin canvases after which Reger named his four movements. Whilst "The isle of the dead" is just tolerable, the others aren't; and nagging memories of Böcklin's buxom mermaids may very seriously interfere with a just appreciation of Reger's sometimes classically proportioned musical images. The titles are evocative, but otherwise harmless. (1) "The fiddling hermit" (better in German—"Der geigende Eremit"), (2) "In the trough of the waves", (3) "The isle of the dead" and (4) "Bacchanal". Both performance and recording are more than adequate. It is possible that the rather enigmatic "German Philharmonic Orchestra" may be the disbanded German Orchestra of Prague, now resident in Bamberg with Keilberth as its permanent conductor. The Suite was written in 1913 at Meiningen—where Reger was conductor of the Court Orchestra—and first performed at Essen (under Hermann Abendroth) in the autumn of the same year. It probably represents Reger's most accomplished excursion into programme music—accomplished, but still hesitant. Its traditional "symphonic" four-movement aspect removes it far from Strauss' rondo and variation procedures, and nowhere does Reger show a sign of adopting Strauss' minute, naturalistic pictorialism. Strauss' glee at Reger's late arrival in the programmatic sphere proved to be premature rejoicing. If anything, Reger proclaimed alliance with the French school—*L'Après-midi d'un faune* appeared in the Meiningen programmes not so long after it was written—the results of which are to be most plainly seen in the Suite's scherzo ("In the trough of the waves") which includes a succession of billowing Regerian breakers very much in the style of *La Mer* (a work Reger must have known). Again, the instrumentation in its increased sensitivity might be said to show Debussy's influence—but this is more likely the consequence of Reger's close association with an orchestra of his own. The first and perhaps best movement, however, may come as something of a surprise both to the new listener and the unwary Reger student. The opening handful of bars are hardly Debussy: in fact they sound much like middle-period Vaughan Williams. If this causes critical head-scratching it is well to remember that Debussy on occasions stands astonishingly close to Vaughan Williams, in the *Trois Chansons de Charles d'Orléans* for example. Reger is not fully recognized as a candidate in the modal lists and the mild archaizing of this first movement gives us a chance to get to grips with a little-studied aspect of his style (compare too No. 18 of the *Schllichte Weisen*, "In einem Rosengärlein"). Reger's hermit suggests that what we have hitherto regarded as a specifically English flavour may have been of a wider European currency than we supposed. In this connection it is not irrelevant to mention my astonishment at listening

to another of Reger's "Frenchified" orchestral works—the very charming *Ballet* Suite, Op. 130: at many stylistic points (particularly in the use of the woodwind) it coincided to quite a remarkable degree with the pungent impressionism of Delius. Certainly I should never have guessed that Reger could have taken a stroll in Delius' paradise garden with such success: the *Ballet* Suite is an especially interesting instance of two widely differing and even opposed composers who, by virtue of approaching the French from two oblique angles, collided somewhere in the middle before going their separate ways; an accident which emphasizes Delius' cosmopolitanism and speaks volumes for Reger's late orchestral ear. Apart from its spasmodic modality the first movement's scoring—solo violin, much-divided strings and largely subdued wood-wind and brass—is strikingly economical. The lengthy "Isle of the dead", cast as one of Reger's typical highly-organized *fantasia* movements, includes an ecstatic *coda* of great intensity: on the whole a not very sepulchral translation of Böcklin's painting, although dissonant brass ejaculations and ominous timpani rolls indicate the more disquieting details of Böcklin's ferry-boat. Presentiments of the grave are thrown to the wind in the concluding bucolic finale whose potential *fugato* disappointingly fails to realize its potentialities—about the only Reger finger-print missing in this set; but perhaps a fugal episode would have been out of order in a bacchanal. The *Böcklin* Suite should appeal to all sorts of listeners, to those who like Reger, to the historians who want to fill a gap in their knowledge of nineteenth- and twentieth-century styles, and to those who dislike Reger—since the latter will discover many new things to dislike. Those who pronounce the Suite dull (the majority, I fear) will merely display the wide-spread lack of a truly vital historical understanding of a near-great composer.

D. M.

LONG-PLAYING

*Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B flat.*London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Solti.
Decca LXT 2564. 39s. 6d.

I heard Mr. Solti direct an exciting performance of *Salome* in Munich some 18 months ago, and people speak highly of his conduct of the opera there, but he's not one for Beethoven, if we may judge from this capable but routine reading. Only one *fortissimo* is at all exciting, shortly after the double bar in the finale. The orchestral playing is adequate for the most part, except for some weaknesses of *ensemble*. What this set lacks is, interpretatively, excitement, mechanically, clarity; the *fortes* are generally muffled and some quite manageable passages over-load. I wonder why he repeats the exposition of the finale and *not* the second half of the scherzo.

*Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E flat.*Concertgebouw Orchestra, c. Kleiber.
Decca LXT 2546. 39s. 6d.

At once we are made aware of Kleiber's passion for the work; he launches into the first movement with splendid drive, so that before you know where you are the double bar is reached, and the listener is wishing the exposition had been repeated. The rest of the reading is on this powerful, fresh scale; one is hearing the work for the first time, which should be the case with all performances of standard masterpieces.

But oh! the recording. Those stormy *fortes* are muffled as if by a heavy curtain, and in higher texture there is so much top that wind and string tone cannot be listened to with any pleasure. The oboe in the *Marcia funebre* has an especially nasal tone, hardly susceptible of correction to normal (and Stotijn—if that is he—is a fine player with beautiful tone); in any case one should not have to be correcting all the time. The horns in the trio of the scherzo make a strangely poopy noise, hardly like the admittedly individual timbre of the brass in this orchestra. The basses' *pizzicati* at the end of the march are barely audible. What a pity to spoil such a noble performance.

Operatic recital: Anton Dermota with Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Karl Böhm.
Lieder recital: Anton Dermota with Hilde Dermota.

Decca LXT 2592. 39s. 6d.

As these canned recitals go, Dermota's programmes are sensible, if unadventurous. A useful Mozartian operatic tenor, rather mannered in tone production and phrasing, he sang charmingly in the *Fledermaus* records, I thought, and nicely enough in *Zauberflöte*, when I heard it broadcast from Salzburg a few months ago. His voice records well, almost too well, for the faults emerge as plainly as the virtues.

In the operatic recital, he sings three *arias* by Mozart and one by Richard Strauss. "*Dalla sua pace*" at once betrays his habit of overstressing the words, as if he was determined to make them mean everything in the world; his tone is full, but not peacefully flowing as it should be and, as on most vocal records of to-day, the voice is too loud for the orchestra. "*Il mio tesoro*" is taken *tempo giocoso* rather surprisingly. Dermota aspirates melismas and runs more than is necessary; some of the runs are unrhythmically sung, and he has rephrased the *fioritura* at "tornar" in one place and substituted a B \natural for B \flat . It was a pity that, even when the *tempo* was so lively, he had to breathe after the long F on "*cercate*". "*Dies Bildnis*" is more satisfactorily sung, though he puts the brake on too heavily at the end and there is some over-loading on high notes (e.g. five bars before the end). He has learned one group, of a quaver and two semiquavers, incorrectly. The sonnet from Strauss' *Capriccio* is rather too sentimentally and loudly sung, so that there is no feeling of intimacy or style, but the real fault is a complete want of blend in the accompaniment between harpsichord and orchestra. The record is not truly centred; it can take a sizeable top-cut without distortion of the voice, and with benefit to the accompaniment.

In the *Lieder*, Dermota is not tempted to force his voice, whose timbre is the more pleasing. The pianist accompanies sympathetically, but her piano sounds tinny in the upper register. Dermota's interpretations are pretty and superficial; we are never led into the depths of the songs' significance. Schumann's *Der Nussbaum* is too arch, his *Die Lotosblume* somewhat sugary (there is no proper *accelerando* in the second verse either). With Wolf and the Christmas-card piety of Mörike, Dermota is more at home; greater singers have made us forget the Christmas-cardiness. On this side are *Nimmersatte Liebe*, *Der Musikant* (Eichendorff), *Auf ein altes Bild* and *Der Gärtner*—this last is performed with less finish; the singer hurries, and the pianist scrambles her closing bars. Dermota sings Strauss' *Ständchen* admirably, with effective use of those head notes to which he so constantly resorts, and with a ringing top A \sharp . The level of tone is abruptly lowered on the last note, probably to avoid blast, but with disappointing effect. The last song, *Zueignung*, is nicely done, though Dermota hangs on to his top A for rather too long on "heilig".

Brahms: *Three Intermezzi*, Op. 117. *Two Rhapsodies*, Op. 79.

Wilhelm Kempff.

Decca LX 3033. 29s. 6d.

This is a dismal disc. The *Intermezzi* are poorly recorded, with keybed noise, variable hum and tinny tone. The rhapsodies are carelessly and dully played. Let us draw a veil over LX 3033.

Schubert: *Piano Sonata in B flat major (op. posth.)*.

Wilhelm Kempff.

Decca LXT 2577. 39s. 6d.

With its long first movement this is a first class work for recording on LP. Kempff's performance is a beautiful, poetic, and deeply understanding one, hardly weakened by some botching in the most ardent parts of the finale. The piano tone is very variable, bad at the beginning, good in the development, bad again in the recapitulation (after what I suspect to be a pause for new tape), good in the *andante*, bad in the *scherzo*, good

at the very end. The first movement is recorded at a low level—I needed the volume full up—but this is raised on the other side, only to be reduced again in the finale.

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor. Prelude and Fugue in D major.

Franck: Pastorale, Op. 19. Fantaisie en La majeur.

Jeanne Demessiaux.

Decca LXT 2578. 39s. 6d.

This is the sort of disc that will appeal to those who like this sort of music played in this sort of way. Demessiaux is a brilliant technician (though not always rhythmically steady), with a monster Wurlitzer approach to Bach that I find unsympathetic to a point of rage and nausea. There are bad breaks in each of the Bach fugues. She plays the Franck with the solemn awe that passes for profundity in the Schola Cantorum and its admirers. I am not a good judge of this disc for, whereas I like Bach to be played with clarity, intimacy, steady rhythm and flexible expression (which is how this accomplished lady does not), I don't like Franck to be played at all, though I suppose she has the authentic manner.

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde, Prelude and Liebestod. Parsifal, Good Friday Music.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Krauss.

Decca LXT 2527. 39s. 6d.

Make no mistake. The LP disc is not so white as she is painted. My machine is admittedly a sensitive one, but it is not right that, on a disc no worse than some, I should have to hear, above the Prelude to *Tristan* (which lasts 111 bars), the following:

- Bar 1. An extraneous plop
- 2. A noise like a viola executing two gratuitous *pizzicati*, and a faint whistle
- 7. Mechanical reduction of top frequencies (hereafter "top down")
- 9. Restoration of those frequencies (hereafter "top up")
- 10. Surface noise oscillating in pitch
- 18. Top down
- 21. Top further down
- 26. Oscillating hiss again
- 41. Top up
- 42. Top down
- 70. Overloading
- 85. Volume level down, top up
- 92. Top up
- 96. Top down
- 110. Top up.

Most of these alterations can be defended on the grounds of more vivid prominence, but it is tiresome that we should have to hear them. This catalogue could be repeated with any LP record I know.

Krauss' interpretations are imaginative, sensuous and dynamic. He obtains an opulently languid atmosphere in the Prelude to *Tristan*, backed by clean ensemble and scrupulous yet poetic observation of Wagner's nuances. The controlled drive behind the work-up to the climax from the *belebend* section, and the tense handling of the runs on upper strings, are especially notable. The performance of the *Liebestod* is not so steady (some late entries should not have been passed); rattles and coughs rear ugly heads. If you have cut the top to reduce the wiry tone of the strings in the prelude (a Decca finger-print), then you will have to uncut it, to avoid muzz in the *Liebestod*. There is a suspicion of a break just before "*Höre ich nur diese Weise*", a place we know as a side-change. The climax is tremendous, but in the penultimate bar Krauss cuts off the oboes with the rest of the orchestra, which is not what Wagner wrote and drops the bottom out of the tension.

The *Good Friday Music* is richly played with a rise at the beginning to a huge *fortissimo* that will play full out on a large machine without distortion; the tubas are rather too prominent. There is some overloading later on, where the strings portray "the sinner's

"tears of grief", there is a hint of side-change in the middle, and the last chord drops in pitch, as though the side was badly centred. Also, at the point where Parsifal turns round to admire the scenery (before "Wie dünkt mich doch die Aue") cow-bells can be heard in the background, why I can't think. The long oboe solo here has an acrid tone colour, which can be made to resemble the timbre of the player by top-cut, though that is just what one ought not to have to do in the middle of a record. The violin playing on both these sides is clean and full in tone (if you can imagine the wiriness taken away); how happy we should be if this orchestra always played so well.

W. S. M.

Bach: Cantata No. 67—Hold in affection Jesus Christ.

W. Herbert, K. Ferrier, Cantata Singers and the Jacques Orchestra, c. Jacques, and *Chorale—Jesu joy of man's desiring.*

W. Parsons, Cantata Singers and the Jacques Orchestra.

Decca LX 3007. 29s. 6d.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Kleiber.

Decca LX 3022. 29s. 6d.

Chopin: Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, Op. 21.

Ellen Ballon and London Symphony Orchestra, c. Ansermet.

Decca LX 3035. 29s. 6d.

Elgar: Cello Concerto in E minor, Op. 85.

Pini and London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. van Beinum.

Decca LX 3023. 29s. 6d.

This reviewer continues to be dissatisfied with LPs generally, but has come to realize that, because of the claims made for them and because of the excellent qualities present in some aspects, he may easily become supercritical. Thus, whereas he cannot advise that this Mozart G minor Symphony compares with the best 78 r.p.m. recording, he is forced to admit, and does so with grace, that coming home from a very fine live performance of Elgar's great Concerto, he found the recording here reviewed gave him almost equal delight. So there is probably not much wrong with it. The performance is agreeable on the whole, and the soloist's part very good indeed. The G minor Symphony is ruined by lack of balance such that, e.g., the "question and answer" phrasing of the marvellous finale first-subject loses all meaning. The too quietly posed question is howled down with a gross ferocity. The Chopin piano part is played poetically, the pianist giving her best is the *andante*—probably Chopin's best nocturne and, as such, demanding poetry. The prosy-sounding accompaniment is not well recorded, but may have been well played. Those equipped for LP should buy the Bach issue. *Hold in affection* is afforded some superb singing from the soloists, and the choir and orchestra are good. *Jesu joy of man's desiring*, whilst no advance on the very old Columbia issue which Goossens beautified with phenomenal oboe playing, is worth having. It is more smoothly recorded.

STANDARD 78

Handel: Messiah—Chorus: "Hallelujah!" and Chorus: "Amen".

His Master's Voice DB 21274. 9s. 8½d.

Zadok the Priest—Anthem.

His Master's Voice DA 1980. 6s. 5½d.

Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance No. 1 in D, Op. 39.

His Master's Voice DA 1981. 6s. 5½d.

The above recorded in the Royal Festival Hall at the Ceremonial opening concert on 3rd May, 1951, and performed by the Royal Festival Orchestra and Choir, Arnold Grier (organ), c. Sargent.

These records should be treasured. But celebrating a great occasion greatly is one thing and the kind of greatness that can be confined in recorded form is another. What was grandeur on the night becomes opulence on the gramophone.

No better record than the *Zadok* anthem could have been chosen to demonstrate the astonishing acoustics of the Hall; the great *staccato* chords are cut off, voices, organ and all, with razor-like precision. The Hall could well be used regularly by the recording companies for big music. One is glad that "*Hallelujah!*" was sung, for nothing in all great music is so endearingly evergreen and, even on this record, the performance is greatly moving.

*Brahms: Geistliches Wiegenlied, Op. 91, No. 2.**

Flagstad with Moore (piano) and Downes (viola).
His Master's Voice DA 1933. 6s. 5½d.

Medtner: The rose; When roses fade, Im Vorubergehen and Elfenliedchen.

Columbia LX 1423. 9s. 8½d.

*Meerestille, Glückliche Fahrt, Die Quelle, and Selbsbetrug.**

Columbia LX 1424. 9s. 8½d.

The Muse, So Tanzet and Waltz.

Columbia LX 1425. 9s. 8½d.

Winternacht, Einsamkeit, and

Praeludium.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf accompanied by the composer.

Columbia LX 1426. 9s. 8½d.

Traditional: Seventeen Traditional Songs of Spain.

V. de los Angeles accompanied by R. Tarrago.
His Master's Voice DA 1970-5. 38s. 9d.

Of all settings of "*Joseph lieber, Joseph mein*", the carol by Brahms must always stand apart and here all the performers contribute to its heavenly effect in a manner beyond praise. The Marian Anderson-Primrose-Rupp version has not appeared in this country, but whatever the quality of that or other versions, one can make no mistake in buying the present one.

The Maharajah of Mysore's Musical Foundation continues in its responsibility for making available the music of Nicolas Medtner. Happily for the Foundation, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf has chosen this relatively unfamiliar ground on which further to prove herself as a *Lieder* singer. Her performance is throughout magnificent and Medtner plays his own accompaniment with the insight expected from a composer-pianist. Sensibly, these records are not offered for sale as a numbered series and one is implicitly invited to pick and choose amongst fourteen songs. Our first choice for these records would be the three Goethe songs, *Meerestille, Glückliche Fahrt* and *Selbsbetrug*. Study of this Goethe group compels comparison with Brahms and provides *datum* points for estimating Medtner as we find him in the songs. The melodic line is broad and its relation to the accompaniment based upon subtle contrapuntal affinities which leave room for a wide range of purely pianistic expression. Yet the synthesis of voice and piano is smoothly achieved to fit the text vocally and harmonically. It is certain that, among twentieth-century song-writers, Medtner deserves a high place. A future generation might well, as has happened with Wolf, confirm that place amongst the highest. Already a few prominent singers know the attractiveness of Medtner's songs; after this issue there will be more such.

Victoria de los Angeles' lovely voice and the guitar which accompanies her are recorded to the highest standard in performances of great beauty. Folk music fails so very often on records; set performances, particularly of songs accompanied by harp, pipes, mandoline, and so on have a folksy air only exorcised from the music by sight of the local setting. Sometimes this is not so, dependent upon genuine musicality invested in the pieces and artistry in the performers who need to be musicians first and musico-archaeologists last,

* Strongly recommended.

or preferably not at all. This set succeeds because of these things and because the tunes come from places where folk song has lived, really lived, into our own times; it does not have to be dug out and polished up.

Mozart: Così fan tutte, act 1: *Recit.*, "Schioccherie di poeti!"; *Trio*, "Una bella"; *Trio*, "La mia Dorabella".

"Fuor lo spada!"; *Trio*, "E le fedi delle femine".

Lewis, Kunz and Borriello, with Glyndebourne Festival Orchestra, c. Busch.
His Master's Voice DB 21115. 9s. 8½d.

Così fan tutte, act 1: "In uomini, in soldati", and
act 2: "Una donna a quindici anni."*

Noni and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind.
His Master's Voice DA 1986. 6s. 5½d.

Verdi: Rigoletto, act 1, "Questa o quella", and

Puccini: La Tosca, act 1, "Recondita armonia".
Lanza and Orchestra, c. Gallinicos.
His Master's Voice DA 1989. 6s. 5½d.

Turandot, act 2, "In questa reggia".

Joan Hammond and the Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Robinson.
His Master's Voice DA 1988. 6s. 5½d.

Verdi: Il Trovatore, act 2, "Condotta ell'era in ceppi".

Cloe Elmo, and

Bizet: Carmen, act 3, Micaela's aria.

Lina Pagliughi.

Both with EIAR Orchestra, c. Parodi.

Parlophone R 30034. 9s. 8½d.

Verdi: Il Trovatore, act 2, "Condotta ell'era in ceppi", and

"Stride la vampa".

Barbieri and Milan Symphony Orchestra, c. Quadri.
His Master's Voice DB 21261. 9s. 8½d.

Un Ballo in Maschera, act 3: *Recit.*, "Forse la soglia attinse", and
Aria, "Ma se m'e forza perdit".

Ponchielli: La Gioconda, act 2, "Cielo e mar!"*

Poggi and Milan Symphony Orchestra, c. Narducci.
Columbia LX 1398. 9s. 8½d.

Tchaikovsky: Pique Dame, act 2, "Ich muss am fenster lehnen",* and
act 3, "Es geht auf mitternacht".

Welitsch and Vienna State Opera Orchestra, c. Moralt.

Decca X 523. 9s. 8½d.

Saint-Saëns: Sanson e Dalila, act 2: *Duet*, "Io salii la montagna".

Ribbachi and Pareri with Orchestra lirica di Torino, c. Basile.
Parlophone R 30033. 9s. 8½d.

The well recorded opening *scena* of *Così fan tutte* is marred as a performance by one fault only; but a fatal one. The Glyndebourne singers cannot laugh; these solo cackles ruin entirely any operatic atmosphere worked up by good playing and singing. Alda Noni's two *arias* from the same opera are perfectly sung. The Lanza record is terrible; not only is the singing in bad taste, but "Questa o quella" is recorded with a blown-out reverberation which puts the performance where it belongs—in the bathroom. In the two recordings from *Il Trovatore*, Cloe Elmo is the better Azucena and it is a pity that the Parlophone record did not include *Stride la vampa* as does the His Master's Voice. In

* Strongly recommended.

this latter record Barbieri is assisted by the necessary tenor interjections from Mariano Caruso and there is no doubt that the record as a whole is better opera. On the other hand, the Elmo record is paired with Pagliughi's lovely rendering of Micaela's song. Poggi possesses the manliest tenor voice in current opera, and uses it with intelligence. His *Masked Ball-Gioconda* coupling gives us two refreshingly unusual *arias* in a well engineered issue. High praise is due to Joan Hammond for an outstanding performance of Turandot's difficult *aria* marred by coarse and bloated accompanimental recording. Both the *Pique Dame* and *Sanson* issues are first-rate as performances and the former is finely recorded; winning the necessary top frequencies from the Ribbachi-Pareri duet means putting up with sufficient surface hiss to mark the record down as a buy.

Mozart: Symphony in E flat, No. 39, K.453.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Karajan.
Columbia LX 1375-7. 29s. 1½d.

Hindemith: Symphony—"Mathis der Maler".

Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Composer.
Telefunken GX 61001-3. 29s. 1½d.

The E flat Symphony is played altogether too massively and Karajan's tonal spectrum consists of charcoal and whitewash; or can the engineers have been responsible? An authoritative "*Mathis der Maler*" is most welcome. This splendid performance is marred by surface hiss and, in places, wiry string reproduction; but in spite of that, no-one should buy elsewhere without hearing the issue.

Strauss: Kaiser Waltz, Op. 437.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Furtwängler.
His Master's Voice DB 21174. 9s. 8½d.

Tchaikovsky: Ballet Suite—The Swan Lake, Op. 20.

The Hallé Orchestra, c. Barbirolli.
His Master's Voice DB 9549-50. 19s. 5d.

Arnell: Ballet Music—"Punch and the Child".

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.
Columbia LX 1391-2, LXS 1393. 24s. 3½d.

The *Kaiser* is perhaps the only Strauss waltz invested with conscious nobility; there is sweetness too. Furtwängler's very well made record presents a performance in which nobility is brought out at the expense of insouciance—an ingredient without which any Strauss waltz becomes just a waltz. The Hallé record is most excellently played and engineered. A balletomane who knows the stage music better than we has told us that Barbirolli's *tempi* are ill-chosen. Listening to a performance untrammelled by the dance, we could find no fault at all.

Arnell's music was written for the New York City Ballet and the goings-on which accompanied it were described as "an excursion into the psycho-semantic make-believe that often is life for the child". In spite of this we liked the music, a suite of brief sketches full of happy musical ideas nowhere overworked and quite brilliantly orchestrated. The recording is first-class.

Bach: Sonata No. 1 in B minor.

Menuhin and Kentner.
His Master's Voice 9607-8. 19s. 5d.

Walton: Sonata.

Menuhin and Kentner.
His Master's Voice 9513-5. 29s. 1½d.

These issues share a common recording fault; the tone of Menuhin's fiddle goes off near the disc centres, the worst patches being sides 2 and 4 of the Bach and the end of the

Walton. Apart from this, both are well produced and the playing generally is superb. The essence of *duo* sonata playing is complete accord in viewpoint; the B minor Sonata is afforded a smooth, cool performance in which every nuance in tone and timing of the one instrument is anticipated by the other. One feels that the Walton Sonata calls for more warmth; this serenely repetitive work is bound to grow on the listener, but the distinguished performers for whom it was written might, we think, have given it a more ingratiating send off; they could not have given it a more polished one.

*Scarlatti: Sonatas in D minor, L.413, and E, L.23.**
Lipatti.

Columbia LB 113. 6s. 5½d.

Chopin: Polonaise No. 4 in C minor, Op. 4, No. 2.
Halina Stefanska.

His Master's Voice C 4100. 6s. 10d.

Debussy: "Images"—Sets 1 and 2.
Gieseking.

Columbia LX 1395-7. 29s. 1½d.

Lipatti's exquisite record includes the most-played and best-loved Scarlatti Sonata, L.413. It will never be better played than here but will be the better loved for this performance. Gieseking also gives a most distinguished rendering of the complete "Images" in a recording that should not be missed. If the darkly coloured C minor *Polonaise* is not played to quite these standards, its poetic and admirably restrained treatment does Miss Stefanska great credit.

J. B.

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* Strongly recommended.

Correspondence

Maidstone.

17th July, 1951.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

EGON WELLESZ

SIR,—In the page and a half of your May issue devoted to letters from Dr. Redlich to those with whom he disagrees appears a criticism of my review of three works by Egon Wellesz. On one point I can agree with Dr. Redlich: my statement that Wellesz' work was not interrupted by his change of domicile was misleading; it would have been more accurate to say that Wellesz' output was only temporarily interrupted.

It would be tedious to reply to the rest of the long letter point by point since the only full answer would be to print the review and the criticism side by side. One sentence from Dr. Redlich's letter, however, must serve to illustrate his peculiar, though not unfamiliar method of argument. Dr. Redlich writes: "He calls Wellesz 'not a prolific composer' and comments on the 'hesitancy of the writing as a whole' whilst almost in the same breath speaking of 'his steady output which has not been interrupted by his change of domicile'". Dr. Redlich calls this self-contradictory, which of course it is in his juxtaposition. My original sentence, however, reads: "Although he is not a prolific composer, Dr. Wellesz has maintained a steady output . . .". Obviously, there is no contradiction here, nor any reproach. My reference to "the hesitancy of the writing as a whole" came near the end of a long review ("almost in the same breath") and referred quite clearly to specific points of style, the discussion of which had formed the main substance of the review. This does not stop Dr. Redlich from misquoting the sentence later ("hesitancy in writing") in such a way as to suggest that I believe that Wellesz composes little and with difficulty. I do not think this, I did not imply it and I did not say it.

Dr. Redlich also asks me to read his own writings on the subject. I can say here that I had in fact done so. But I have never felt that a review is the proper place for footnote, cross-reference and statement of sources, however reputable. Nor do I feel that it should be necessary to use your correspondence columns in order to put together in proper order the jigsaw pieces of a review which Dr. Redlich has pulled apart and re-assembled with such misdirected adroitness.

Yours faithfully,

N. G. LONG.

Savile Club,
69, Brook Street, W.
17th September, 1951.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

JUST INTONATION

SIR,—On my return from India after some years my attention has been drawn to the review of Dr. A. D. Fokker's book *Just Intonation* in your issue for November, 1949.

There is a growing conviction that music requires more freedom than the theory that all keys, to be perfect, would have to be in the Ionian mode, permits; and that it ought to be possible to change from key to key on a keyboard instrument such as the organ without sacrificing true intonation, or resorting to the rough surgery of "equal temperament"—an obviously vain attempt to approximate all keys to the Ionian mode. It is increasingly clear that chordal harmony results from equal-stepped intervals, and that where these are present there is a tonic, although only in one instance does the key correspond to the Ionian mode. The search for quarter tones should teach us that if we are ever to arrive at true intonation we shall need to know not only tone intervals but also the true semitone intervals, and to perfect the chromatic scale. The dominant seventh is in itself a proof that harmony requires "diatonic chromaticism".

The familiar ratios of the Ionian mode provide the basis for search:—

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C							
8	:	9	:	10	:	10·6	:	12	:	13·3	:	15	:	16

Let us take as our starting point C 66, the philharmonic pitch, the nearest to aural perfection yet reached in the search for harmony. And in order to give the overtones of a complex tone, let us make it slightly sharper—C 66·6. This gives us, in the Ionian mode, the following:—

C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C							
8	:	9	:	10	:	10·6	:	12	:	13·3	:	15	:	16
66·6	:	75	:	83·3	:	88·8	:	100	:	111·1	:	125	:	133·3

We have now to fit this into a true chromatic scale. In the Ionian mode the initial ratio, 8:9, repeats between the subdominant and the dominant, with the necessary consequence that in the key of G (possibly the Mixolydian mode) the initial ratio, 9:10, repeats between the dominant D and the submediant E. In short the general rule for every key is that the ratio between the tonic and the supertonic repeats either between the 4th and 5th or between the 5th and 6th.

If we take the hint which Sir Donald Tovey gave us when he wrote that "Harmony has not yet found a place for such a simple and natural phenomenon as the seventh note of the harmonic series", we may assume that in true intonation the fundamental ratio is not 8:9 but 7:8. In the key of C the ratio 8:9 occurs three times; between the 1st and 2nd, the 4th and 5th, and the 6th and 7th. (The Ionian, Lydian and Aeolian modes correspond to the keys of C, F and A, and would have had this initial ratio). Let us assume that a tone below one or more of these keys there is the tonic of a key with the initial ratio 7:8. An obvious experimental choice is E flat 77:7, a tone below F# 88:8, as both figures have a promising sound and it is already clear that the initial ratio of 7:8 in the key of E flat will be repeated between the dominant B flat 116:6 and C 133:3. So we can now write a chromatic scale beginning with E flat 77:7, with equal semitone intervals up to the dominant note. There we take a fresh 1/14th, and continue the new interval (an increase of a half, from 5·5' to 8·3') till the leading note is reached at D 150; the scale closes on the original interval, 5·5':—

E flat	E	F	F#	G	G#	A	A#
14 : 15 : 16 : 17 : 18 : 19 : 20 : 21							
77:7 : 83:3 : 88:8 : 94:4 : 100 : 105:5 : 111:1 : 116:6							
B flat	B	C	D flat	D	E flat		
14 : 15 : 16 : 17 : 18 : 18·6							
116:6 : 125 : 133:3 : 141:6 : 150 : 155:5							

Text books which illustrate the sequence of "just intonation" by making the tonic either C 48 or C 64 introduce confusion about 63/64 and 80/81 etc. The above chromatic scale, if correct, leads to the interesting discovery that a correct whole number chromatic scale would be:—

42 : 45 : 48 : 51 : 54 : 57 : 60 : 63 : 67·5							
67·5 : 72 : 76·5 : 81 : 84							

Thus 64 and 80 disappear completely, and with them goes all confusion. 72 becomes the tonic for the only key in the Ionian mode, and corresponds to C 66·6'.

Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR MOORE.

14D Fitzjohn's Avenue,
N.W.3.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

J. C. SMITH MANUSCRIPTS

SIR.—In *Anecdotes of G. F. Handel and J. C. Smith* by the Rev. W. Coxe of Bemerton, 1799, a number of manuscript compositions by J. C. Smith were said to be in the possession of his "daughter-in-law", i.e. step-daughter, Lady Rivers.

These manuscripts included five English operas (*Teraminta; Ulysses; The Fairies; The Tempest; Medea*); three Italian operas (*Dario; Issipile; Il Ciro Riconosciuto*); seven oratorios (*Paradise Lost; David; Nabal; Judith; Gideon; Jehoshaphat; Redemption*); and various miscellaneous items.

I should be very much obliged if any of your readers could give me information as to what happened to this collection, and if any of it is to be found in private or public libraries. There is a manuscript score of one of the Italian operas, *Issipile*, in the British Museum, but there is nothing to indicate that this was the copy in the possession of Lady Rivers.

Yours faithfully,

MOLLIE SANDS.

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